THE

Christian Monitor,

Containing an Earnest

EXHORTATION

TO AN

Holy Life.

With some DIRECTIONS in order thereto.

Written in a plain and easie Style, for all sorts of People.

Follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.

Imprimatur,
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& eminent for piety & virtue

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THE
Chriſtian Monitor, &c.

CHAP. I

An Exhortation to an Holy Life, *with Motives thereto.*

IT'S very ſad to conſider, not only how few Nations there are in the World which profeſs Chriſtianity, but alſo of thoſe who do profeſs it, how few there are comparatively that live according to their Profeſſion. Wherefore it well beſeems all Chriſt's faithful Servants, eſpecially the Miniſters of his Goſpel, to uſe their utmoſt Endeavours, by Life and Doctrin, by publick and private Exhortations, by preaching and writing, and by all the Ways they are capable, to promote true Piety and Holineſs amongſt all ſorts of Men, whether high or low, rich or poor, without which no Man can be happy, either in this World, or that to come. And though I well know that, thanks be to God, we abound with Multitudes of excellent Books written to this End: yet are not ſuch ſhort Inſtructions as theſe that follow, to be condemned as uſeleſs, ſince they will, it's like, be more generally diſperſed, and that amongſt the very meaneſt of the People, and may more eaſily be read and remembred by ſuch as have neither Time to read large Books, nor Mony to buy them. With ſuch as theſe I have occaſion often to meet, and for their Sakes chiefly it is that I publiſh this little Paper; being encouraged thereto by ſome pious Perſons, both of City and Country, who intend to give ſome of them away to poor People about them, and thought others might do the like. And may it pleaſe God to give a Bleſ-

ſing to ſuch a mean Undertaking as this, and ſucceed it to the Good of Souls, I ſhall little regard the Cenſures of the Curious: Remembring the Saying I have ſomewhere met with of a devout Writer to this purpoſe, That he was deſirous his Books ſhould be ſcattered abroad upon Pedlers Stalls, and thence come into the Hands of common People, for the encreaſing of Knowledg and Piety, rather than be ſolemnly laid up and buried in the Libraries of the Learned.

Wherefore, without any more Preface, I ſhall addreſs my ſelf to you, for whoſe Sake I write theſe Lines, as a Perſwaſive to an holy and religious Life. Now, in order thereto, let me beſeech you to look back upon your Lives paſt, and call your ſelves to account, whether it has been your Care and Study to live in ſuch a Godly Manner as becomes thoſe who are baptized into the Name of Chriſt, and after him are called Chriſtians. Have you well conſidered what is the meaning of this Name, and what Engagement you lie under to an holy Life by taking it upon you in Baptiſm? And do you keep well in Mind your Baptiſmal Vow, wherein you renounced the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh; and promiſed to be Chriſt's faithful Soldiers and Servants, and ſo to continue all the Days of your Life? Have you ſo far underſtood and conſidered theſe things, that you have made it your chief Buſineſs to walk accordingly? Do you watch carefully, and fight manfully againſt your ſpiritual Enemies? Do you live as thoſe that believe the Goſpel, ſincerely endeavouring in all things to know the Will of God, and do it? Since you take Chriſt's Name in your Mouth, are you careful to depart from all Iniquity? In a Word, is this your greateſt Study and Deſign to pleaſe and glorify God, and to work out your own Salvation? If your Conſcience can truly witneſs for you, that it is indeed ſo, and that wherein at any Time you fall ſhort, or do amiſs, you are heartily grieved for it, and do daily labour to amend and grow better: If it be thus with you, I ſay, then bleſs God for his Grace and Mercy, hold on and proſper, and fear not but God will be with you; he will own you as his Children, and for his Son Jeſus ſake, will both pardon your Sins, and aſſiſt you by his Grace; he

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will guide you by his Counsel, and at length receive you to Glory.

But pray deal faithfully with your own Souls, and tell me, has it not been quite otherwise with you? Have you not contented your selves with the bare Name and Profession of Christianity, and in the mean time led an ill Course of Life, directly contrary to your Profession? Have you not lived in wilful Ignorance of your Duty, or in gross Sins against your Knowledge? Do not the Temptations of the Devil, the Allurements of the World and the Flesh many times prevail more with you, than the Commands of Almighty God, and the Voice of your own Conscience? Are you not wont to neglect God's Worship and Service, both in the Church and at Home? Yet, do you not profane his holy Name by Swearing and Cursing? Are you not often guilty of lying and slandering, of cozening and cheating, if not of down-right stealing? Do you not in your Anger use railing and reviling Language? Or, do you not live in Envy and Malice, seeking for Revenge of those that have done you any Injury? Do you not allow your selves in Drunkenness and Whoredom, or some other known and wilful Sin? To be short, Is there not something or other in this World that you love more than you do God himself, and his son Jesus? Are you not much more concerned for your Bodies, than for your precious Souls? And do you not more earnestly seek for Food and Rayment, and the good things of this Life, than after that eternal Kingdom of Glory which God hath promised to his faithful Servants in the World to come?

If this indeed be your Case, I beseech you make a Stand, and consider well what you have been doing; what a sad and dangerous Condition you have brought your selves into, and what the End of it will be if you hold on in such evil Courses. Humbly beg of God to make you duly sensible of your Sin and Danger, and to keep the Sense thereof so close to your Minds, that you may be brought not only to mourn for your Sins but to loath and abhor them, and utterly to forsake the same, henceforth resolving, by the Grace of God, wholly to give up your selves to his Service, and to walk stedfastly

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in those holy and good Ways, which he has appointed you. This is that to which I do most earnestly desire to perswade you. And that I may do my utmost to prevail with you, I shall lay before you some very weighty Arguments, which I request you seriously to ponder of as you read them, and God grant they may have their Effect upon the Heart of every Reader. *Amen.*

I. That you may be prevailed with to become God's faithful Servants, consider, first, *That this was the great End for which God made you, and keeps you alive, and gives you so many Mercies of all Sorts.* You can tell, I hope, that God made you, and that he made you to serve him, by living according to his Commandments. These are some of those first things which Children learn; and it were well, if when they are grown up to be Men and Women, they would use seriously to think of them, and practise accordingly. The wise God has made all Creatures for some good End or other, and he has fitted them all for those Ends and Purposes for which he made them. To Man therefore has he given the Use of Reason, chiefly to fit him for Religion, and to render him capable of knowing, loving and serving his great Creator and Benefactor: And it is Religion which makes the great Difference betwixt a Man and a Beast: For brute Creatures have no Knowledge of God, no Regard to him, but are wholly led by their Senses, and mind nothing else but what is before them here in this World. But the poorest Man on Earth, who has the Use of his Reason, is near akin to the very Angels themselves; his Nature is like theirs, and but a little below them, so that he may be much taken up in the same holy Works that they are employed in, even in loving and praising, and adoring the great and good God. To this End he may study both the Works and the Word of God, which reveal him to us, and should continually put us in mind of him. And all the good things we enjoy should still make us sensible of the Goodness of God from whom they come; and fill our Hearts with Love and Thankfulness, and our Mouths with Blessing and Praise. This is the most proper Use of our Reason, and this God most justly expects from us reasonable Creatures; and even this the poor Man may ren-

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der without any Hindrance to his daily labours; and may ſtill keep ſuch an awful Senſe of God upon his Mind, as may reſtrain him from wilful Sin, and make him careful always to pleaſe his Maker. And ſo our Reaſon was given to bridle and govern our Appetites, our Luſts and Paſſions; that we ſhould not be led away into Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, into Wantonneſs and Uncleanneſs, nor into Rage and Fury, like bruit Beaſts that have no Underſtanding: But ſhould live ſoberly and chaſtly, quietly and peaceably with all Men, doing them all the good we can. For ſuch holy Purpoſes as theſe chiefly was our Reaſon beſtowed on us, and therefore in this Manner ought it to be employ'd. Certainly, ſince God hath made us of a Nature ſo much better than Birds or Beaſts, he expects from us other Works and Services than he does from them. They know nothing of God that made them, nor have they any Knowledg of another Life after this, but when they die, there's an End of them. But to us hath God given immortal Souls, of more Value than the whole World: and for this End hath he created us, that we might ſerve and honour him here in this Life, and ſo may live with him, and enjoy him for ever in the World to come.

Now, if this be the End of our Creation, ought we not to live up to it? Do we not ſee all other things anſwer the End for which they were made? The Sun gives Light by Day, and the Moon by Night. The Earth brings forth Corn and Graſs, and the Trees bear Fruit. The Horſe, the Cow and the Sheep, with many other Creatures, afford us much Service and Benefit. And ſhall Man alone be uſeleſs and unfruitful, to live to no good Purpoſe? When they are all ſo ready to ſerve us, ſhall not we chearfully ſerve him that made us for his own Service? Surely we cannot think that the wiſe God ſent us into the World only to eat and drink, to ſleep and play, or to work hard for a poor Livelyhood. If this were all, we had better have been made bruit Creatures, or never have been made at all: Much leſs can we think that the holy God made us on purpoſe to ſin againſt him, to diſhonour his Name, and provoke him to anger. He did not give us Reaſon to make us crafty and cunning for

the World, that we might know how to cozen and cheat our Neighbours. He did not give us Tongues to swear and curse with, or to talk foolishly and filthily; let us not then use them to any such ill Purposes. Since God has given us precious immortal Souls, let us not live like Beasts that perish, wallowing in the Mire of base sensual Lusts and Pleasures. By this means we become worse than Bruits themselves, for we debase our own Natures, we abuse our Reason to our own Shame and Hurt, and to God's Displeasure. Thus we cross the End of our Creation, and are more stupid and ungrateful than the very Ox or Ass: For they *know their Owner*, and do good Service to those that keep and feed them, *Isa.* 1. 2, 3. O let us not give God cause to complain of us, as he there does of the Jews, that *he nourished and brought up Children and they rebelled against him*: Think how grievous it is to you that have Children, after all your Care and Kindness, after all your Cost and Labour, to have them prove stubborn and disobedient, loose and idle Prodigals. O see then that you be not such towards your heavenly Father who made you and preserves you, and every Day renews his Mercies upon you. He keeps us alive, and makes our Lives comfortable. He gives and continues to us our Reason and Senses, our Health and Strength, Food and Raiment, and all the good things we enjoy. He supplies our Wants, and helps us in all our Distresses. He gives us Light by Day, and Rest by Night. He enables us to follow our Callings, and gives us a Blessing to our Labours, that we may provide for our selves and Families. And does not this good God well deserve all the Love and Service which we can possibly render him? O how can we find in our Hearts wilfully to offend him who thus delights in doing us good! Foolish and unthankful Wretches we are, thus ill to requite the Lord for all his loving Kindness. We could not deal so with any Friend or Neighbour on Earth, that had been always kind and loving to us. Are not Servants bound to work for them who maintain them and pay them Wages? And ought not Children to obey their Parents who begot them, and brought them up? How much more then ought we to obey God our Father, who gave us Life at first, and still pro-

prolongs it from one Day to another, when he could in a Moment cut us off in our Sins, and throw us into Hell? But in much Mercy he ſpares us, and gives us Space to repent, and is very unwilling to deſtroy us, and therefore waits long to be gracious to us. O then let his Patience and all his Goodneſs at laſt have this happy Effect upon us; let it lead us to true Repentance, and ever hereafter engage us to Diligence and Conſtancy in his Service, *Rom.* 2. 4. 2 *Pet.* 3. 9.

II. To which Purpoſe conſider again that *this was the End for which God ſent his Son Jeſus into the World*, even to ſeek and ſave us loſt and miſerable Sinners, to bring us to Repentance and Newneſs of Life, that ſo we might be reſtored to the Love and Favour of God, which he had loſt by ſinning againſt him. Our firſt Parents, *Adam* and *Eve* were created in a very holy and happy Eſtate, but they fell from it by ſinning againſt God, and ſo came all Miſery into the World, and then did our heavenly Father take pity on us, and ſent his own Son out of his Boſom to be our Saviour and Redeemer, to reform us from our *Sins*, and ſo to deliver us from *Miſery*: Firſt, he will make us *holy*, and then we ſhall be made *happy*. For as Man loſt his Happineſs by diſobeying God's Command, ſo he muſt recover it by becoming obedient to his Will in all things. To this End hath the Lord Jeſus fully reveal'd God's Will to us when we were in Ignorance and Darkneſs. He hath given us holy Precepts for the Rule of our Life: And made moſt rich and precious Promiſes to perſwade us to our Duty, and denounced dreadful Threatnings to affright us from Wickedneſs.

And when we had deſerved the Wrath of God for our Sins, then did Jeſus Chriſt ſhed his moſt precious Blood to make Atonement for us, and to obtain our Pardon and Forgiveneſs. He died for our Offences, and roſe again for our Juſtification, *Rom.* 4. 25. And in his Goſpel he hath given full Aſſurance of God's good Will to Mankind that he will be merciful to us and pardon us, if we truly repent of our Sins and forſake them. Thus hath Chriſt opened a Door of Hope for us, to encourage us to return to God: For if there had been no Hopes of Mercy, we ſhould never have been drawn to Repentance, but even

like the Devils themſelves ſhould have remained full of Hatred and Malice againſt God, utterly deſpairing of Relief from him. But whilſt the Death of Chriſt does ſo much engage and encourage us to *forſake* our Sins, it gives not the leaſt Encouragement to our *Continuance* in them. Let us not think that Chriſt *died for* our Sins, that we might have Liberty to *live in* them, and yet be ſaved at the laſt. No, but he came to ſave us *from* our Sins, not *in* them. He makes us bleſſed by turning us from our Iniquities. He died to redeem us from a vain and evil Converſation, to purify our Hearts, and reform our Lives, and make us a peculiar People Zealous of good Works, *Mat.* 1. 21. *Acts* 3. 26. *Tit.* 2. 14. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18.

The Death of Chriſt for us vile Sinners ſhews the infinite Love of God in finding out this Way for our Salvation: But then it ſhews alſo what an evil thing Sin is, and how hateful to God, ſince he would not pardon us without the ſuffering of his own dear Son on our Account. And therefore if the Conſideration of all this does not bring us to hate and abhor our Sins, and to love and ſerve our God and Saviour, we are never like to have any Benefit by Chriſt's Death. All our Profeſſions of loving him, and believing in him, will ſtand us in no ſtead without obeying him. True ſaving Faith in Chriſt is that *which works by Love* both to God and our Neighbour. Chriſt accounts none to be his Friends but thoſe that keep his Commandments, and to ſuch only will he grant Pardon and Salvation, *Gal.* 5. 6. *John* 15. 14. *Heb.* 5. 9. 1 *John* 3. 8.

Since then, the ever bleſſed Jeſus the Son of God came down from Heaven, became a Man, and died a moſt painful Death upon the Croſs, that he might ſave us from Sin and Miſery, ſhall we not accept of him as our Lord and Saviour, who comes to deliver us from the Power of the Devil, and our own Luſts, to make us the Children of God, and Heirs of Glory, which is a thouſand times greater Deliverance than that of the *Iſraelites* from the *Egyptian* Bondage? Will you not be moved by all that Chriſt has done and ſuffered for you? Shall not his Love conſtrain you to love him, and to hate all Sin which was the Cauſe of his Sufferings? Will you tread under foot his

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moſt precious Blood, and even crucifie him afreſh, and again put him to open Shame? Thus in ſome ſort do wicked Men uſe their Saviour, whilſt they go on in their Sins, which are ſo diſpleaſing to him. They that lie and cozen for a little Gain, what do they but in *Judas* ſell away Chriſt for Mony? They that live in Hatred and Malice, and do Miſchief to their Neighbours, do in effect run the Spear into Chriſt's Side, and drive Nails into his Hands and Feet. And they that give themſelves to Riot and Drunkenneſs, do even mingle Gall and Vinegar for him to drink. They do all that in them lies by their ſinful Pleaſures to put him again into Agonies and Pains. But on the other hand it is a Delight to our Saviour to ſee us humbled for our Sins, and reſolved to forſake them. He will readily and effectually intercede for us with our heavenly Father, who is moſt willing to receive returning Prodigals. There is Joy in Heaven when Sinners on Earth repent. Even this our return to God by true repentance is the beſt Recompence we can make to our bleſſed Saviour for all his Pains and Sufferings. When *the Pleaſure of the Lord proſpers in his Hand* by the Converſion of Sinners, *he then ſees the Travel of his Soul, and is ſatisfied*, Iſa. 63. 10, 11. And ſhall we not afford this Satisfaction to our Redeemer, who hath undergone ſo much for our ſakes, and ſtill out of his tender Love to our Souls follows us with ſuch earneſt Invitations to come to him for Life and Happineſs? Could we deny him this moſt reaſonable Requeſt, if we ſaw him now in perſon ſtanding before us, beſeeching us to turn and live? And this he now does by his Spirit, and by his Miniſtry: But that leads me to the next.

III. Conſider therefore, that *this alſo was the End for which the holy Ghoſt is given, and all the Means of Grace afforded*, even to ſanctifie our Hearts, and make us an holy and obedient People. God knows the Weakneſs and Corruption of our Natures, and therefore in great Mercy he affords the Aſſiſtance of his holy Spirit, to enlighten our Minds, and purifie our Hearts, to renew and change our Natures, and guide us in Ways of Holineſs here, that ſo we may be fitted for eternal Happineſs with the moſt holy God in the life to come, *Joh.* 3. 3, 5. *Rom.* 8. 9.

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And for this End were the holy Scriptures written by Men assisted and inspired by the holy Ghost, to be a Light to our Feet, and a Lanthorn to our Path, to direct us in the plain way to everlasting Life, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 16, 17. And the holy Sacraments were appointed for the Increase of Grace to all that make a right Use of them. And our blessed Saviour did at first send abroad his Apostles to preach the Gospel to all the World, and hath ever since continued a Succession of Ministers in his Church, whose standing Office is to administer the Word and Sacraments, to watch over the Souls of the People, to instruct and admonish them both in publick and private, and to use their utmost Diligence to bring them to the Knowledge and Love of God, and of his Son Jesus. And God is ever ready to accompany their Endeavours with his Blessing. Do you not often feel his good Spirit putting good Thoughts and Motions into your Mind, inclining you to that which is holy and good, checking and restraining you when you are running into Evil? But on the other hand it's the evil Spirit, even the Devil himself, that tempts you to sin, and would hinder you from your Duty. It's the Devil that tempts Men to Pride, and Malice, and to all manner of Wickedness. For he being a proud, malicious, and most wicked Spirit, would have Men to be like himself, that so they may for ever be miserable with him. Will you not then resist the Devil, the great Enemy of your Souls, and be led and guided by God's good Spirit, and follow his Motions and the Directions of his Word which leads to Happiness? O do not grieve this blessed Spirit, who alone can give us true Comfort, do not resist and quench his Motions, nor provoke him to depart from you, and leave you to your own Lusts, and to the Power of Satan, who seeks your Ruin.

Moreover, as the Devil has his Instruments to draw Men to Wickedness, one ill Man tempting another; so Ministers are sent from God to draw you to Righteousness and Holiness. They are Ambassadors and Messengers of Christ, and do in his Name beseech you to be reconciled to God, who is most willing to be reconciled to you, if you will but cast away those wicked Works which provoke him to Anger, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. O how will it rejoyce

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the Hearts of your Ministers that truly love your Souls, to see the Success of their Labours, to have you come to them, enquiring what you must do to be saved, declaring your Repentance for your former evil Courses, and your Resolution henceforth to become new Creatures? Certainly we exhort you to nothing but what is highly reasonable and for your own benefit, whilst we perswade you to return to the Favour of God. Why then will you not hearken to us? If a Message of Mercy should be sent you from the King, when you were in Danger of Death for Rebellion, would you not most gladly and thankfully receive it? And will you not be as thankful and obedient to the King of Kings, and as wise to save your Souls, as to preserve your Bodies?

And Besides his Word and Ministers, God also pleads with you by his Providences to bring you to Repentance. Sometimes he sends Afflictions to correct you for your Faults, to shew you the Evil of Sin, and draw you home to himself; and at other times he sends many Mercies, as I have told you, to soften your Hearts, to engage and allure you to his Service: And such good Use we ought to make of all God's Dealings with us.

IV. Consider further *what Engagements you lye under to an holy Life by your own Profession, Promises and Vows.* You profess and call your selves Christians, the Disciples and Followers of Christ: Ought you not then to follow his Example, and obey his Commands, if you will make good that Name? You will think it a great Disgrace not to be taken for a Christian, but for a *Turk* or *Jew*. Beware then lest you bring this Disgrace upon your selves by an unchristian Temper of Mind, and ill Course of Life. If you are false or cruel, covetous or lustful, like a *Turk* or *Jew*, it matters little what you call your selves. He is not a Christian that's one outwardly, but he that has the same Mind and Spirit that was in Christ Jesus. God will not at the last Day judge of Men by their Names and Titles, but by their Hearts and Lives. Only it will go much worse with a Man that calls himself a Christian, and yet lives like a Heathen or Infidel.

And pray consider how by your Baptism you are solemnly listed under Christ's Banner, to fight against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; and by the keeping this Vow,

you ſhew your ſelves to be Chriſtians indeed. But if you are led away by the Temptations of Satan, and do his Works, and are enſnared by the Vanities of the World, the Luſts and Pleaſures of the Fleſh, you do in Effect renounce your Baptiſm.

Beſides this, have you not renewed this ſame Vow at the holy Communion, there openly profeſſing your Belief in Chriſt crucified, and promiſing Obedience to him? If you have not received this holy Sacrament, though you have long been at Years of Diſcretion, you then ſhew your ſelves by this Neglect, to be no obedient Diſciples of Chriſt, ſince you do not obey his plain Command *to do this in remembrance of him*, *Luk.* 22. 19. And indeed I fear that many careleſs People will not come to the Communion, becauſe they think it would bind them to lead ſuch a ſtrict and holy Life as they have no mind to. But do not they caſt off Jeſus Chriſt from being their Maſter, who look upon his Commands as too ſtrict and ſevere, and will not promiſe to obey him? Yea, do they not thereby even diſown their Baptiſm, by which they were bound to this Obedience? So that the ſame Reaſon which keeps them from the Communion, it's like, would keep them from being baptized, if it were yet to be done. And what Sort of Chriſtians are they that would reject Chriſtian Baptiſm, becauſe it engages them to an holy Life?

If you are not guilty of this Neglect, but do ſometimes come to the Lord's Supper, to keep up the Remembrance of his Death and Sufferings: Then pray conſider, that by receiving this holy Sacrament, you do ſolemnly renew your Vows to be Chriſt's faithful Servants and Diſciples, and to walk in ſincere Obedience to all his holy Laws, as you hope for Salvation by his Death. Wherefore may I not well beſeech you to uſe all due Care to live according to this your Promiſe and Engagement? What a Shame is it for a Man to be falſe to his Word, much more to his Oath! O do not then break that Oath which you have made to God himſelf, by taking his holy Sacrament. And call to mind if you have not ſometimes on a ſick-Bed, or in ſome great Danger, made the ſame Promiſe and Vow: And has not God ſpared you to ſee how you would perform the ſame? Take heed then of abuſing his Mercy, and breaking your Promiſe.

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Moreover I might shew how your professing to believe the Creed engages you to live well, according to the holy Faith you profess, *which is a Doctrin according to Godliness.*

But lastly, the very Prayers you put up to God, lay the same Engagement on you, even to serve and please this God whom you worship. To instance briefly in the Lord's Prayer, whilst we call God *Our Father*, &c. ought we not to love and honour him, to obey him and submit to him as our heavenly Father? Whilst we pray that his *Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come, and his Will done in Earth as it is in Heaven*, ought we not our selves to honour his Name, and advance his Kingdom, by obeying his Laws, and by doing his Will constantly and chearfully as the Angels do in Heaven, to the utmost of our Power? Praying for *daily Bread*, teaches our Dependence upon God, and engages us to serve him by whom we are maintained. When we pray God *to forgive our Trespasses as we forgive others*, this strictly binds us to forgive those that offend us, as ever we hope for Mercy from God. And when we pray not *to be led into Temptation, but delivered from Evil*, this should restrain us from running into Temptation, and make us careful to avoid all Sin and the Occasions of it. To the same purpose I might also mention the Prayers of the Church, to which I hope you come frequently. Therein you begin with the Confession of your Sins, and ought you not to forsake as well as to confess them? And in the End of the Confession, you pray *God for Christ's sake to grant that you may lead godly, righteous and sober Lives.* And almost in every Prayer, you will find somewhat to this Effect. Now I hope you are in good earnest in these your Prayers, else you do mock God and affront him, instead of worshipping and pleasing him. But if you do heartily desire these things which you pray for, then you will do your part for the Attainment of them, and will diligently endeavour to live in so holy and good a Manner, as you pray that you may do. And if you thus add Diligence to your Prayers, God's Grace will never be wanting for your Assistance.

V. Consider also how just and equal all God's Commandments are, such that our own Reason cannot but approve of them, as being most agreeable to us as we are

reasonable Creatures. To instance in the chief of them; is it not most just and fit that we should love God above all, who is the best and most perfect of all Beings, and from whom we receive all our good things? Ought we not to pray to him who alone can hear and help us, and to give Thanks and Praise to him, who is the Father of Mercies? Is it not most reasonable that Children should obey their Parents, and Subjects their Rulers? And that all Men should live in Peace and Love with one another, and speak truly, and deal honestly as they would be dealt with? Is it not most fit and decent for a Man to eat and drink moderately, so as makes most for his Health? To be modest and chast in all his Conversation: Will not every man's own Reason acknowledg the Equity and Fitness of these and the like Precepts? And for some that do seem more severe, there may be given very good Reason for them also: So that plainly, all God's Commands are the wise and wholesome Counsels of a most tender Father, who forbids his Children nothing but what's hurtful, and requires nothing of them but what makes for their own Good, even *to deal justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with their God*, Mic. 6. 8. *Christ's Yoke is easie, and his Burden light*, Mat. 11. 30. God's Service is perfect Freedom, as we daily style it in our Prayers. And *his Commandments are not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. Shall we not then be so dutiful to our heavenly Father, yea, so wise for our own Good, as to obey these most reasonable and gracious Laws which he has given us? So just and equal they are, that we cannot break them without offering a kind of Violence to our selves, and going contrary to the Reason of our Mind. *They are Light to the Eyes, and Joy to the Heart, sweeter to a good Man than Honey, and the Honeycomb*, as the *Psalmist* often speaks. As suitable are God's Commands to our Natures, and as useful and healthful to our Souls, as the most wholesome Food to our Bodies. And for a Man to direct his whole Carriage and Behaviour according to the Laws of God, is as much his Wisdom, as it is to go cloathed in decent Apparel, and to eat and drink what is good for his Nourishment. But on the other hand, for one to run naked about the Streets, to fill his Mouth with Mire and Dirt, to cut and mangle his

his own Flesh, is not a greater Sign of Folly and Madness than for a Man to live according to his own Lusts, rather than after the Laws of God, which are so agreeable to our Reason, and do so plainly conduce to our own truest Interest and Advantage, both in this Life and that to come; as will appear by what follows.

VI. Consider therefore in the next place, that it is a most certain Truth, *That the leading of an holy and good Life, is in all respects very greatly for a Man's own Benefit and Comfort; even in this present World. Godliness is profitable for all things:* It makes for the Quiet of our Minds, the Health of our Bodies, the Increase of our Estates, and procures us much Credit and Esteem, much Love and Good Will among our Neighbours. Yea, it commonly brings along with it, all manner of Blessings, and makes the Enjoyment of them more sweet and pleasant, and keeps off a great deal of Trouble which wicked Men bring upon themselves, and affords much Support and Ease under those Afflictions which the Providence of God may lay upon us. Insomuch that no Man of what Rank and Condition soever he be, can lead a truly comfortable Life, except he lead an holy and good Life. All this is frequently taught in Scripture, and may be easily manifested by clear Reason: Or if that be not sufficient, it is also most plainly to be discerned by daily Experience, that they who truly fear God, have much more Peace and Comfort in this World, than wicked and loose Livers, that make no Conscience of their Ways.

If I should make the Comparison only betwixt a sober Man and a Drunkard, which do you think has the better of it in this Life? How often do the great Drinkers not only waste their Estates, but destroy their Health, weaken their Brains, and shorten their Lives? How often do they fall into Quarrels, get Wounds and Bruises, and sometimes Death it self, either by fighting, or by one sad Accident or other? Sometimes the very Children in the Streets run after them, shouting and making Sport with them, and if you follow them to their own Homes, what disturbance and mischief do they make there? What swearing and cursing, what brawling and scolding, what quarrelling and fighting is there? What Outcries and Lamen-

tations do Wife and Children make? Who now perhaps are glad to get away for fear of their Lives, as before they sat starving for want of that Money which these ill Husbands waste in the Ale-house. (A Sin and Shame it is to those that entertain them.) And after they have lived a while at this wild and wicked Rate, the next News commonly is, that either for Debt or for Disorder they are laid up in Prison, and sometimes by those very People in whose Houses they drink away all they got. And now they are forced to live upon Bread and Water, and linger out a miserable hungry Life, in a cold stinking Dungeon, till either the Charity of Friends, or Death it self release them thence. (And by the way, is this such a pleasant Life, that it's worth being damn'd for to Hell Torments to all Eternity? Of which afterwards,)

Thus also might I tell of the sad Effects of Whoredom, which is commonly follow'd with Poverty and Disgrace, and many times with a filthy loathsome Disease, which make Men rot above ground. And thus angry, proud, malicious and revengeful People are a continual Torment to themselves and to all about them, and seldom have any Peace or Quiet, either with their Neighbours, or in their own Families. The like may be shewn of all other Vices which are still wont to bring their own Punishment along with them; to say nothing of what is or ought to be inflicted by the Magistrate. Especially such wicked People as Thieves and Murderers, Traitors and Rebels do seldom escape the Hands of publick Justice. *But who will hurt Men if they be Followers of that which is good?* Or what Hurt does a Man bring upon himself by living soberly and chastly, by fearing God and honouring the King? What Mischief does Man get by minding his own Business, and living quietly and peaceably among his Neighbours? Nay, how happily may we see even some of the meanest sort of People live, that are diligent in their Callings, and sober and temperate, and careful to please God, and keep a good Conscience in all their Ways? Very seldom it is that they are pinched with much Want; or if they should fall into a low Condition, yet all good People that know them, are ready to pity and relieve them; and will often trust them with Mony or Goods till they are able to pay.

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And every Body is willing to employ an honeſt Induſtrious Man, ſo that he ſhall ſeldom want Work or Trading. But idle, riotous People that follow whoring and drinking, gaming and cheating, and ſtealing, that neglect God's Service, and prophane the Lord's Day, being often in the Ale-houſe when they ſhould be at Church; theſe are the People, if you obſerve it, that do commonly fall into the baſeſt Beggery and Miſery; and Men do but little pity them, becauſe they brought it all on themſelves. O how happy might all ſorts of People be, in a very great Meaſure even at preſent, if they would but become truly religious and good! It is their own Sin and Folly, their Luſts and Paſſions that occaſion moſt of thoſe Troubles and Miſeries which they meet with; tho' I know they uſe to cry out of their hard Fortune, and to lay the Blame upon others, and ſometimes to murmur againſt God himſelf. But they conſider not how they provoke God to Anger daily by their hainous Sins, and therefore may juſtly feel his heavy Judgments for the ſame, beſides all the Miſchief which naturally follows upon Wickedneſs. And this makes their Condition to be ſad indeed, that they are always liable to the Wrath of God, and may juſtly expect his Vengeance to fall upon them, and to ſtrip them of all their Comforts, and throw them into the ſoreſt Calamities.

But on the contrary, herein above all lies the good Man's Security and Comfort, that he enjoys the Bleſſings and Favour of Almighty God, and therefore is ſure to want nothing that's truly good for him. So it's promiſed, *Pſal.* 84. 11, 12. *Mat.* 6. 33. *They that firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteouſneſs of it, ſhall have all that is needful added to them.* So that a poor Man can take no ſurer Courſe to provide for himſelf and Family, than to become truly religious; tho he may not have great things in the World, yet he ſhall have Food convenient. And then, which is better than all, he ſhall have God's Bleſſing with what he enjoys, and this will afford him more true Content and Comfort in that little he has, than a wicked Man can find in all his great Treaſure. Godlineſs with Contentment is the greateſt Gain, *Pſal.* 37. 16. 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. A poor Man that has only *Jacob*'s Wiſh, Food to eat, and Raiment to put on, if alſo he has *Jacob*'s Piety, and takes

the Lord for his God, and lives in his fear and service, and enjoys the Sense of his Favour, how blessed is the State of this Man? How chearfully may he live at all times, notwithstanding his Poverty? What though his Dwelling be mean, his Fare somewhat hard and course, and his Cloathing very plain; yet whilst he loves God sincerely, and worships him duly and devoutly, he may even turn his Cottage into a Palace, yea, a Temple; and the blessed God will visit him with his Presence, will accept of his Services, and refresh him with the Light of his Countenance. And upon this Knowledg and Enjoyment of God it is, that the true Comfort of a Man's Life depends, whatever his outward Condition be. It is this alone which gives inward Peace and Satisfaction to his Mind, and sweetens all his Mercies, and above all things, bears up his Heart under those Afflictions he meets with. For the best of Men must expect their Share of outward Troubles in this World, such as Sickness and Pain, Loss of Friends and Estate, with the like; these are Calamities common to all. But here the good Man has clearly the Advantage, since he looks upon all that befalls him as coming from the Hands of a most wise and gracious God, who knows what is best for him, and to whose Will he freely resigns himself and all his Affairs, saying with his blessed Master, *Not my Will, O God, but thine be done.* Yea, he receives Afflictions as sent in Kindness, to correct him for his Faults, to exercise and encrease his Graces, and so to prepare him for Glory. And here's the great Benefit of Religion, that it teacheth a Man whither to go for Relief and Comfort in his Straits and Difficulties, even to this great and good God, who is most able and ready to help his People in all Times of Trouble. This we still read in Scripture was the Course of holy Men, and they found it was not in vain. And to this Day will God's faithful Servants find the good Effects of thus devoutly applying themselves to God by Prayer. *For his Eyes are ever upon the righteous, and his Ear open to their Cry.* He takes pity on them, comforts and supports them. He'll lay no more upon them than he enables them to bear; and in his good Time he supplies their Wants, and delivers them from their Afflictions, yea, he turns them into Blessings, and

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makes *all work together for their Good*, as he has promiſed to them that *love him*, Rom. 8 28. O what a Happineſs is it to be acquainted with God, to have a due Senſe of his Providence, ſo as to live on it and improve it, *Job* 22. 1.

But how ſad is the Condition of a wicked Man, who has no ſuch Knowledge of God, no Love to him, nor any Expectations of Help and Relief from him? Even in his greateſt Proſperity he's a very miſerable Man, whilſt he lives without God in the World: But he feels himſelf to be ſo indeed, when he falls into any great Calamity, and knows not which way to turn himſelf for Help and Comfort. For as Wickedneſs ſtill brings Men into Miſery (as I have before ſhewn) ſo there it leaves them in the moſt wretched forlorn Condition. And the ill Temper of their Minds, adds Weight and Load to their Calamities, and grievouſly encreaſes the Smart of them. The Senſe of their own Guilt ſometimes torments their Conſciences; and fills them with Fear and Horrour: Sometimes they rage and fret againſt thoſe that helpt on their Sufferings, and ſometimes they even blaſpheme God himſelf, and murmur againſt his Providence. Whilſt the good Man with *Job* bleſſes God in all his Afflictions, theſe are ready to follow the Counſel of his Wife, even to Curſe God and dye. For being full of Anguiſh and Deſpair, they are at their wits end, and weary of their very Lives, as we read of *Cain* and *Judas*, and ſuch like, both in Scripture and other Hiſtory. For my part I do verily think, that next to the Devils and thoſe in Hell, there are no Creatures in the World more miſerable than wicked ungodly People; and whilſt we ſee what the common Fruit of Sin is here on Earth, we may eaſily be convinced that it leads to Hell and Damnation hereafter. And all this do Men madly and wilfully run into by their own evil Doings; even as a Man that thruſts his Hands into the Fire, is like to feel Pain and Smart. By *forſaking of God, they forſake their own Mercies, and ſinning againſt him, they wrong their own Souls*, yea, their Bodies too, and all their Concerns. Thus you ſee that an holy Life is moſt profitable for us even in this preſent World, preventing much Evil, and bringing all manner of Good along with it. Or if a Man ſhould fall into ſuch hard times, as to ſuffer meerly for Religion and

a good Conscience, he shall then commonly find such wonderful Comfort and Satisfaction of Mind, that he will triumph and rejoyce in the midst of his Sufferings: As we know the Apostles and primitive Christians did, and that especially in Hope of the glorious Rewards laid up for good Men in the Heavens. But that brings me to the last Consideration I shall mention.

Lastly, Namely, *That an holy Life thro' the rich Mercy of God, will render us perfectly and eternally blessed in the World to come, whereas a wicked Course of Life, leads to eternal Misery and Torment.* According as we live in this World, so must we fare in the next: For this Life is a State of Trial in order to Eternity. Even at Death a good Man has Ground of much Comfort, having the Testimony of a good Conscience, and the Sense of God's Love, so that with St. *Stephen*, he may commit his Soul into the Hands of the Lord Jesus, who is ready to receive him. But how sad is it with a wicked Man, when beside all the Pains of the Body, his Mind is tormented with the Remembrance of his Sins, and with the Fears of God's Wrath? But the great Difference will be made at the Day of Judgment; when the *Sheep shall be set at Christ's right Hand, and the Goats on the left*; as you have it described, *Mat.* 25. 31. &c. To those on the right Hand, that is, the pious and good, will be pronounced that joyful Sentence, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.* And then shall they enter into that most glorious Kingdom, where neither Sin nor Sorrow shall ever disturb them more; where they shall never feel nor fear any manner of Evil or Pain, either of Soul or Body. But shall be admitted into the immediate Presence of God, where there is all Fulness of Joy for evermore. They shall have such a clear Knowledg of the ever-blessed God, and such a lively Sense of his infinite Perfection, as will fill them with Admiration, Love and Praise: And they shall feel the Love of God and their Saviour so fully shed abroad upon them, as shall raise their Hearts to the very utmost Heights of Joy and Thankfulness, and their Mouths shall be filled with Hallelujahs and Songs of Praise, and in this most delightful Employment shall they joyn with all the blessed Company

ny of Heaven for ever and ever. That's the Perfection of all, that the Joys of Heaven ſhall never have an End. It is both a moſt *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory* that's promiſed, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, 18. *For ever ſhall we remain with the Lord.* 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. The eternal God will be the Portion of his People, and their Joy in him ſhall never be leſſened, or abated thro' all Eternity. They ſhall be always bleſſing and praiſing him, always ſatisfied and raviſhed with the beholding of his Glories and the Enjoyment of his Love; always delighting with the moſt pleaſant and agreeable Society of Angels and Saints: And never more ſhall dear Friends and Companions be ſeparated from each other, when once they are met in Heaven. Death hath now no Power over them. They are become in ſome meaſure even like to Chriſt himſelf, and there ſhall ſee him as he is in all his Glory, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Joh.* 3. 2.

But what it is thus to be made like to Chriſt, to ſee God and enjoy him, we are not able fully to expreſs or conceive whilſt we are here in the Body; to compare the Glories of Heaven to all the Riches and Honours of Courts and Palaces here below, were greatly to leſſen and diſparage them. So great are thoſe Heavenly Glories and Joys, that they can never be clearly known till they are enjoyed: As a blind Man can never tell what Light is, till his Eyes are open to diſcern it. It's enough for us that we have full Aſſurance from the Promiſes of the Goſpel, that ſuch a State of unſpeakable Happineſs there is provided for good Men in the Life to come. And as the Lord Jeſus is gone before to prepare it for them, ſo now by his holy Spirit he prepares them for that bleſſed Place, by working in them that Grace which fits them for Glory, and is the very Firſt Fruits and Beginnings of it in their Souls. True Holineſs is the moſt certain Pledge of eternal Happineſs, and makes us meet for it, *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. *Col.* 1. 12.

Since then ſuch a Glory there is, ſo infinitely great, ſo ſure and certain, ſhall we not all be perſwaded to ſeek after it, by walking in thoſe holy Ways that lead thereto? Surely we ſhall, if we have any Belief of God's Word, any Regard to our own Intereſt. Muſt our Souls live for ever in another World, and ſhall we not uſe our utmoſt Care and Diligence to make them happy for ever there?

there? Are they not our own Souls? And do they not then deſerve our Love and Care? *If we be wiſe* and *good*, *is it not for our ſelves*, for our own Happineſs? And is there any other Way to make our ſelves happy but by gaining the Love of God and eternal Life? Do we not ſee that all worldly Comforts are ſhort and uncertain? They wither in our Hands, and periſh in the uſing. Our Neighbours and Acquaintance are daily dying round about us; many of our deareſt Friends and Relations are already gone before us, and we our ſelves are ſwiftly following after. We are juſt upon the Borders of Eternity, liable to a Thouſand Diſeaſes and Miſchances that may ſoon ſtop our Breath, and then we are gone. Since then, we cannot make ſure of this Life, nor the Enjoyments of it: O let us ſee to make ſure of eternal Glory; which we may do, by God's Aſſiſtance, even the pooreſt Man on Earth, if he will become ſincerely pious and good. For God is no Reſpecter of Perſons. Chriſt died for poor Men as well as rich; and they that have no Inheritance on Earth, may be Heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom, if they be rich in Faith and Love to God, *Jam.*2.5. And methinks they that have ſo much trouble and ſorrow in this life, ſhould be moved to ſeek after Riches and Glory in the life to come. There the pooreſt *Lazarus* ſhall have a Thouſand times more Pleaſure and Joy, than any of the proud *Dives*'s, or rich Gluttons and Epicures have now in their delicious Fare and gorgeous Apparel. Nay, the very Hopes of this Glory may fill the good Man's Mind, with ſo much Joy, that he will even forget his Poverty, and not count his Affliction worthy to be compared with the Happineſs he hopes for; nor would he change Eſtates with the greateſt Prince upon Earth, who is a Stranger to theſe Hopes. Thus it was with the Holy Apoſtles and their Followers, 2 *Cor.*6.10. 1 *Pet.* 1.6,7,8.

Thus have I briefly told you ſomewhat of the happineſs of the godly in the World to come: But on the other Hand conſider what will be the Portion of the wicked, who deſpiſe the Mercies of God, and the Offers and Promiſes of the Goſpel, theſe will at laſt fall under his heavy Wrath and Vengeance, and there muſt remain for ever in the moſt intolerable Torment of Soul and Body,

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ſet out by the moſt dreadful things, ſuch as Fire and Brimſtone, and a never dying Worm that perpetually gnaws and ſtings their Hearts. They are caſt into outer Darkneſs, where there is weeping and wailing and gnaſhing of Teeth, not the leaſt glimmering of Hope or Comfort to all Eternity, *Mat.* 25. 30,41,46. *Mark* 9. 43. to the End; 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7,8,9. Theſe are the Goats that being ſet on the left Hand, muſt hear that doleful Sentence, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* An heavy Doom, and yet moſt juſt. For they *departed* from God and neglected his Service here on Earth, and therefore now they muſt *depart* from his Preſence, in which their corrupt Minds can take no Delight. They preferr'd the Tavern and the Alehouſe before the Houſe of God; and took more Pleaſure in feaſting and drinking, in roaring and revelling amongſt their wicked Companions, than in worſhipping of God in the Communion of Saints: They loved not Prayers and Praiſes in the Aſſemblies of his People, nor had any mind to come to the Lord's Table, though often invited thereto; and therefore muſt they now be ſhut out from ſuch holy Company, and from ſuch high and heavenly Employments, for which they are altogether unfit. They were many of them greatly given to *Curſing*, and now it's come upon them. That *Curſe of God* which they in their Rage often wiſhed to their Neighbour, is now fallen upon themſelves. Nay, did not many of theſe prophane Wretches even call for this Curſe upon their own Heads, in that helliſh Language of *God damn me?* And what wonder if their Petition be now granted, and they ſentenced to that Damnation which they thus called for? By the *Devil* they were led and guided, and by his wicked Inſtruments and their own bruitiſh Luſts; and therefore now they muſt have the *Devil and his Angels*, and damned Sinners like themſelves to be their Companions in Torment, who are ſo far from pitying or comforting each other, that rather they curſe one another now in their Miſery, who before tempted one another to Sin. O ſad meeting of the Drunkards, the Whoremongers and the Harlots there together in thoſe ſcorching Flames: Where in vain they cry out for a Drop of Water to cool

their

their Tongue. It must not be granted: their good things are all past and gone; and the Remembrance of all their Riot and Lewdness serves but to encrease their Torment. And now also they may remember how God did again and again call upon them, and they would not hear; neither therefore will he now hear their Cries, when Pain and Anguish is come upon them, *Prov.* 1.24. to the End. And though they may cry out against their Companions, and accuse the Devil, and in their Rage blaspheme God himself, yet will their Consciences fly with greatest Fury upon themselves, who in spite of all the Warnings that were given them, did by their own wilful and impenitent Continuance in Sin, plunge themselves into this Misery, from whence they must never be released. O dreadful Words, *everlasting Fire! Eternal Torment!* How does the Thought of this sink and break their Hearts, and fills them with deepest Horrour and Despair! *Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings?* Who *can*? And yet the damned Sinner *must*, though in the most raging and impatient manner. After they have lain thousands and millions of Years in that Place of Torment, yet is there not a Moment less to come, there is a whole Eternity still behind. The Worm *never* dies, the Flame is *never* quenched. Nor is God to be accused of Severity in all this, since it was the Sinners own doing, the Fruit of their own Choice: For they knew that Sin would sink them into Hell, and yet they would venture upon it. And indeed it sinks them thither as naturally as a Stone falls to the Ground. Even here on Earth, the proud and covetous, the malicious and revengeful, the profane and sensual do kindle somewhat of Hell in their own Souls; and whilst they carry along with them the same wicked Temper of Mind, it must still needs make them most wretched and miserable in another World, as long as ever their Souls live, and these Vices stick to them, that is, to all Eternity. Let not him that carries Fire in his Bosom accuse God's Providence for making the Fire hot, when he feels it burn him; but let him blame his own Folly and Wilfulness: And so must self-condemned Sinners be forced to do.

And

And now tell me I beſeech you, is there not all the Reaſon in the World that you ſhould ſpeedily repent you of your Sins, and caſt them from you with Loathing and Deteſtation, and henceforward ſet upon a Courſe of ſerious Holineſs, that ſo you may eſcape all this Miſery threatned to the wicked, and may partake of that Glory which is promiſed to the pious and good? Does not a Thouſand Pound a Year deſerve the Labour of one Day? And will not all the Joys of Heaven, that ſhall laſt for ever and ever, abundantly reward our Diligence in God's Service for this ſhort Life time? And are not the eternal Torments of Hell enough to reſtrain Men from a looſe and ſinful Life, though it were never ſo profitable or pleaſant here for a little while? But you have before heard it fully proved, that even at preſent an holy Life is in all Reſpects moſt for our Benefit and Comfort. So that without doubt a good Man finds more Sweetneſs and Satisfaction in the Way to Heaven, than Sinners do in the Way to Hell. Our gracious God appoints us an eaſie and honourable Service, and gives glorious Rewards: But the Devil is a moſt cruel Maſter, and ſets his Slaves to the vileſt Drudgery, and afterwards pays them very ſad Wages, *Rom.* 6. 21, 22, 23. Whether then will you be Chriſt's Freemen, or the Devil's Bondſlaves? Whether will you walk in the good Ways of God, that bring Peace and Comfort here on Earth, and eternal Glory in Heaven; or in the crooked Paths of Sin, which now bring Sorrow, and Shame, and Pain, and hereafter will plunge you into eternal Miſery and Torment in Hell? Thus are Life and Death, Happineſs and Miſery ſet before you; what Choice then will you make? One would think there was no great Difficulty in this Caſe, to a Man that has the Uſe of his Reaſon, if he will at all make uſe of it in the Affairs of his Soul. A little thinking ſerves turn to convince Men that there is no reaſon why they ſhould chuſe Poverty and Reproach, Pain and Impriſonment (if they can honeſtly avoid them) rather than Riches and Honour, Eaſe and Liberty. But I am ſure there is a Thouſand times leſs reaſon for a Man to diſobey God, and damn his Soul for ever, rather than to pleaſe and ſerve him, and ſo make ſure of eternal Salvation. Wherefore let me again

beſeech

beseech you to take the Matter into Consideration, and think seriously what is most reasonable and most for your own Interest, and then chuse accordingly. And I pray God direct your Hearts to make so wise a Choice that you may never have Cause to repent of it, either in this World or that to come, *Amen.*

CHAP. II.

A brief Description of an Holy Life, with some short Directions in order thereto.

IF you now demand of me wherein consists this Holiness of Life, to which I have been thus long and earnestly exhorting you, that I hope you may in some measure understand by reflecting on what I said at the Beginning, and by attending to what I have intimated all along in my Discourse. Yet for your Assistance, I shall somewhat more plainly represent it to you, tho but very briefly; as no other can be expected in this little Paper.

In the general then (as I have before express'd it) I am only perswading you to live as becomes true Christians, according to your Baptismal Vow, in the keeping of which consists your Christianity. Now by your Baptism you are engaged to believe in, and obey, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. You must sincerely and heartily own God the Father as your Maker and Preserver, the Son of God as your Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost as your Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter. And accordingly must you behave your self both in Heart and Life: And therefore you must renounce the Devil, the World and the Flesh, which would draw you off from God, and must stedfastly believe the Articles of your Christian Faith, and carefully keep God's holy Will and Commandments all the Days of your Life. Your Faith is required in order to Obedience: For if you do not believe Christ's Gospel, you are not like to obey it. In these Two things then consists the Religion of a Christian, to which

which he is engaged by his Baptism, *viz.* in believing what Jesus Christ hath revealed, and in doing what he hath commanded. In short, he is a good Christian who does firmly believe his Creed, and carefully keep the Commandments.

The Doctrins which we are to believe, are indeed more largely and fully delivered in the holy Scriptures, which were written by Men inspired by the holy Ghost, and accordingly ought to be received as the Word of God, and to be diligently read, and stedfastly believed. But the chief Articles of the Christian Faith are briefly summ'd up in that which we call the Apostles Creed, *I believe in God the Father*, &c. This I hope you are well acquainted with, it being so short and plain, and daily repeated in the Church Service; and therefore I shall not set it down at large. And this also I hope you do believe to be most true. You would take it ill, if I should question your Belief of the Creed, without which you are not to be reckoned as Christians. But let me advise you to consider seriously and frequently of these great Truths contained in the Creed, that you may more clearly understand them, and be more affected with them. And pray see that your belief of them be very firm and deep rooted in your Soul, that so the Fruit of your Faith may appear in the Holiness of your Life. Without this, the bare knowing of the Creed, and repeating it never so often will stand us in no stead. For, as I told you, Obedience is the End of Faith. And all the Articles of our Belief do most plainly tend to make us holy and good, if we will but carefully attend to them, and consider well of them. To shew it in a few Words, *If we believe that God the Father Almighty made us and all the World*, then are we bound to love and honour him, to worship and obey him as our Maker and Preserver, who is Almighty in Power, infinite in Wisdom, Goodness, and all manner of Perfections. If we believe that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Redeemer of Mankind, who died for us, and rose again, and ascended to Heaven, and will thence come to judge the quick and the dead*, and will grant to all penitent and obedient Believers, the *forgiveness of their Sins*, and *everlasting Life*, but will sentence

the wicked to everlasting Misery: Our Belief of this must lead us to true Repentance and Amendment of Life, and to an humble Dependence on the Mercies of God, and the Merits of Christ, for Pardon and Salvation. And if we believe, *That it is the Office of the Holy Ghost to sanctifie us, and all the elect People of God*; then ought we to pray to God for his holy Spirit, and we must comply with his good Motions, and submit to his working upon our Souls, that he may sanctifie us and make us holy, that so we may be living Members of Christ's *Holy Catholick Church*. And in this Church we are bound to continue, that so in the *Communion of Saints*, we may enjoy the Benefit of the Word, Sacraments and Prayer, by which means the Holy Ghost works Grace in us, and encreases the same, till it be perfected in eternal Glory, to which good Men shall be advanced both in Soul and Body at the Resurrection, as their Souls made Entrance upon it presently after their Death.

Thus you see how a right Belief leads a Man to Holiness of Life. And therefore in holy Scripture do we find so much Mention made of Faith, or of believing in God and in Christ. This in many places is highly extolled, and most strictly required of us, as the very Sum of our Duty; insomuch that we are often said to be justified or pardoned on account of our Faith, and to be saved by Faith, and all this chiefly, as I suppose, because true Faith produces Obedience, and makes a Man become an humble and sincere Disciple of Jesus Christ, and so makes us fit for the Mercies of God in and thro' our blessed Saviour. But when Faith does not bring forth the Fruit of Holiness, and good Works, it's of no Value with God, nor will stand us in any stead, as you may see at large in the second Chapter of St. *James*, to name no other places. Wherefore you know we are engag'd by our Baptism, not only to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, but also to keep God's Commandments, which I am to speak of next.

Now these Commandments are also plainly contained in the holy Scriptures: and therefore there is still more reason why you should diligently read and study the same, that you may know the Will of God and do it. And all

that

that is to be done by us, I reckon it contained in the Ten Commandments, as they are explained to us, and urged upon us, both by the Prophets in the Old Teſtament, and by our Saviour and his Apoſtles in the New: Eſpecially in our Saviours Sermon in the Mount, in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters of St. *Matthew*. And therefore often read over theſe Three Chapters. There you will find what manner of Perſons the Diſciples of Jeſus ought to be, even like their Maſter, of an humble lowly Spirit, meek and gentle, pure and peaceable, merciful, patient, and the like. Such as theſe he pronounces bleſſed in the Beginning of that heavenly Sermon, and theſe alone are they whom he will make moſt bleſſed with himſelf for ever. But if you will have the Sum of your Duty to God and your Neighbour, as required by the Ten Commandments, briefly repreſented, take it in the very Words of the Church Catechiſm.

My Duty towards God is to believe in him; to fear him; to love him with all my Heart, with all my Mind, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength; to worſhip him; to give him Thanks; to put my whole Truſt in him; to call upon him; to honour his holy Name and his Word; and to ſerve him truly all the Days of my Life.

My Duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as my ſelf, and to do to all Men as I would they ſhould do to me. To love, honour, and ſuccour my Father and Mother. To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him. To ſubmit my ſelf to all my Governours, Teachers, Spiritual Paſtors and Maſters. To order my ſelf lowly and reverently to all my Betters. To hurt no body by Word or Deed. To be true and juſt in all my Dealings. To bear no Malice nor Hatred in my Heart; To keep my Hands from picking and ſtealing, my Tongue from evil-ſpeaking, lying and ſlandering. To keep my Body in Temperance, Soberneſs and Chaſtity. Not to covet and deſire other Mens Goods; but to learn and labour truly to get my own Living, and to do my Duty in that State of Life into which it ſhall pleaſe God to call me.

Here you have your Duty in a little room, which you may eaſily keep in Memory; but eſpecially beg of God to write his Laws in your Heart, that you may freely and chearfully obey them in your Life and Converſation. And

for your further Assistance, I shall a little enlarge upon the chief of these Duties, especially the Love of God and your Neighbour, and so conclude with some short and general Directions for the guiding of your Steps more readily and constantly in the Ways of Holiness all the Days of your Life.

To love God with all our Heart and Soul, is the first and great Commandment; as our Saviour himself teacheth us, *Mat.* 22. 37, 38. This makes us more easily to obey all the rest of his Commands. For if we truly love God, we shall be very fearful to offend him, and very careful to please him in all our Ways. And then do we truly love God with all our Heart, when we love him more than all other things in the World, more than Riches, Pleasures, Honour, Friends, or any other Enjoyments, yea, more than our very Lives; so that we will part with all, rather than lose the Favour of God, in which we account our Happiness chiefly to consist. This I take to be the very Essence of Religion, and 'tis that without which our Saviour tells us, we cannot be his Disciples, *Mat.* 10. 37, 38. But when once we are got to this blessed Temper, we shall find it no very hard Matter to deny our selves, and take up our Cross, and follow our Lord and Master both in well-doing and in patient Suffering.

Wherefore, let us earnestly beg of God by his holy Spirit to work this Love in our Hearts. And to our Prayers let us add our own diligent Endeavours; and especially let us be much in thinking of all the Goodness and loving Kindness of God, manifested to us and to all the World. Let us consider what he has done for us already, both for Soul and Body, and what he has promised to do in the Life to come. And never let our Hearts be at rest, till they are entirely fixed upon the ever-blessed God as our chiefest Good, and only satisfying Portion. And let us earnestly seek his Favour through our Lord Jesus, the Mediator, who came into the World on purpose to bring us into a state of friendship with God, that we might love him, and be loved of him, and live with him for ever in Love and Joy. But always remember that Obedience to God, is the only sure Evidence of true saving Love. He that

that loves God, will hate and abhor Sin and Wickedneſs. Let the Son pretend what Love and Honour he will to his Father, he does not truly love him, except he uſe all due care to pleaſe him.

And if you do thus ſincerely love God as your Father, then you may always comfortably truſt in him, and depend upon him, which is another great Duty, and brings great Peace and Quiet to our Minds, *Iſa.* 26. 3,4. Whilſt you live in Obedience to God's Commands, you have a ſure Intereſt in his Promiſes, and may ſafely rely upon his good Providence for the Performance of them. Wherefore whatever your wants, your Dangers, or Sufferings are, do not diſtruſt the Providence of God, but wait patiently, and do your own Duty, and be aſſured, God in his good time, will ſuccour and relieve you; he will direct, comfort and ſtrengthen you. Let all the Experience you have hitherto had of his loving Kindneſs, engage you to truſt in him as long as you live. And take great care that you never murmur nor repine againſt God under any Affliction whatever; when you meet with the heavieſt Croſſes and Diſappointments, or loſe your deareſt Relations and Friends, ſay with holy *Job*, *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* Beſeech God to teach you that excellent Leſſon of Contentment in all Eſtates, *Phil.* 4. 11,12,13. Though you may be low and poor in the World, yet conſider, you have always cauſe to be thankful, but never any reaſon to complain. God knows what Condition is beſt for us, and let us leave it to him to chuſe what we ſhall have. We that deſerve nothing but Wrath and Miſery, ought to acknowledg the great Goodneſs of God, that we are on this ſide Hell. *It is of the Lord's Mercies, that we are not utterly conſumed*, and that we do enjoy any Meaſure of Comfort. Think how poor the Lord Jeſus was for our Sakes, who had not where to lay his Head, and was miniſtred to by the Subſtance of others; and in the ſame mean Condition did the holy Apoſtles live. Your low Condition frees you from a great many Snares and Temptations, and from a great many Cares and Sorrows that rich People meet with. If you but truly love God, and have a Treaſure in Heaven, you are very rich, though you have neither

ther Gold nor Silver. Fear not, but God will give you and yours Food and Raiment, and having that, let us be content and thankful. Yea, let us put the very worst, that we should starve to Death for want of Bread (which not one of a Thousand does in Times of Peace and Plenty) yet if our Souls be fit for Heaven, and carried thither, we shall have no Cause to complain of the manner of our Death. I have been a little the larger upon this for the sake of poor People, who are apt to be discontented, and to murmur at their Condition; tho alas, they commonly bring themselves into it, or make it much worse by their own careless and loose Lives, as was beforementioned.

And yet before I proceed to the Duty you owe to your Neighbour, let me in a few Words direct you, as to the Worship of God in Prayers and Praises. This is a Duty most frequently enjoyn'd in Scripture, and practised by all good Men, and the very Light of Nature may direct us to it. We have daily need of God's Mercy, and do daily taste of it, and therefore we are taught to *pray continually*, and *in every thing to give Thanks*. To God alone must we offer up our Prayers and Praises in the Name of Jesus Christ, as he himself teacheth us, *Mat.* 4. 10. *Joh* 16. 23. We must not pray to Angels or Saints, nor make use of them as our Mediators, for this is the peculiar Office of Christ, who died for us, and is now interceding at the right Hand of God, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *Heb.* 7. 25. Wherefore we mean, sinful Creatures, must always come to God in the Name of Christ, and for his sake alone, hope for the Favour of God, the Pardon of our Sins, the Acceptance of our Persons and Services, and the Salvation of our Souls.

And our Saviour teacheth us to worship God in a pure and spiritual Manner, with our Hearts and Souls; because he is a Spirit, and searches the Hearts of Men, *Joh.* 4. 24. Wherefore by no means may we make any Image or Picture of God, nor may we give religious Worship to an Image, which is directly contrary to the second Commandment. Neither may we frame in our Minds any bodily Shape or Likeness of God when we pray to him, but must conceive of him as a most pure and glorious Spirit, most powerful

powerful, and wiſe, and good, who fills the whole World with his Preſence, and is always near to us, tho not to be ſeen with bodily Eyes; and hears our Prayers, and knows our Wants, and is both able and willing to help us.

Our Saviour hath commanded us to pray in private, when we are alone, *Mat. 6. 6.* And there he taught his Diſciples how to pray, and hath given us that moſt excellent Form which we call the Lord's Prayer, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c. which by the way, may aſſure us, that Forms of Prayer are very lawful, and the Lord's Prayer may both ſerve for a Pattern to direct us in all our Prayers, and alſo is it ſelf moſt fit to be uſed and joyned to our other Prayers. But it is not proper to uſe the Belief and the Ten Commandments for Prayers, as the Manner is of poor ignorant People; tho we ought often to think of them, or rehearſe them, for the quickning of our Faith, and the guiding of our Lives.

Upon all Occaſions, in all our Troubles and Diſtreſſes, let us be much in Prayer to God, and ſtill ſeek to him, for Mercy and Comfort, who is always nigh to them that call upon him in Truth and Sincerity. Would the poor Man ſeek as earneſtly to God for Relief, as he does to his rich Neighbour, he would find it the ſureſt Courſe to have his Wants ſupplied. And let us alſo frequently be lifting up our Hearts to God in Thanksgiving and Praiſe, for all his Mercies and Favours which he beſtows upon us. Thus may even the pooreſt Man have his Mind often employ'd when he is at work in the Shop, or in the Field, or when he is walking in the way, or ſailing on the Seas, which would not hinder, but further his Labours, and make them more eaſie and pleaſant. But be ſure to ſet ſome Time apart every day for ſolemn prayer.

Very fit it is to begin the Day with Prayer to God, as ſoon as we riſe out of Bed; bleſſing his Name for our Preſervation and quiet Reſt, begging his gracious Preſence with us all the Day, that we may be kept from all Evil, eſpecially from Sin, the worſt of all. And at the Evening let this be our laſt Work before we lie down to ſleep, humbly to commit our ſelves to God by Prayers. *Pſal. 92. 1, 2.*

Exceeding

Exceeding useful is it for those who have Families, to joyn together Morning and Evening in Prayer to God, and in reading some part of his holy Word, for which purpose there are many good Books of Devotion: And tho they have none of them, yet they may use such of the Prayers of the Church as are proper for their purpose, which are to be found in the Morning and Evening Service, and in other places.

Before you sit down to Meat, beg God's Blessing upon it, and afterwards return Thanks for it.

But besides our Devotions in the Family or Closet, our great Duty is to worship God in the publick Assemblies of his People, which by no means we ought to forsake, *Heb.* 10. 25. Suffer not your selves therefore by any Pretences whatever to be drawn away, either by Papists or Sectaries, from the publick Worship of God, as it is now by Law established in the Church of *England*. But see that you duly resort to your Parish Churches, and that not only on Holy-days, but on the Week-days, when you have Opportunity and Leisure. More especially see that you constantly frequent the Church on the Lord's Day, if not hindred by Sickness, or some other very great and urgent Cause. Let not that excuse keep you from Church, which would not keep you from the Market. Bring as many of your Family along with you as can possibly be spared. Come to the very Beginning of the Service, and stay quietly to the End of it, not running away before the Blessing, as many careless People rudely do, as if they were glad to get away, as from a Prison. Behave your selves with all due Reverence, both of Body and Mind considering the Majesty of that God, in whose Presence you stand, before whom the very Angels veil their Faces. Always kneel at your Prayers, if there be Convenience, or stand at least, *Psal.* 95. 6. Above all, look well to the Temper of your Soul, and keep up an awful Sense of the great God to whom you are praying, and mind well what is said, as you go along with the Prayers, and offer up your Desires to God; otherwise, though you may speak much, you do not pray at all. Avoid all vain and wandring Thoughts, as much as possible. When you joyn in the Confession of Sins, think of your own particu-

lar

lar Faults, and be deeply humbled for them: And be unfeignedly thankful for all God's Mercies, whilst you are praising his Name; and earnestly long after that Grace you pray for. Attend with Care and Reverence to God's Word, when it's read from the Desk, and also to the preaching and explaining it from the Pulpit, that you may be both diligent Hearers, and faithful Doers of the Word. Neglect not the Church in the Afternoon, tho' you should live where there is no Sermon. Catechising may be as useful to you, and this ought to be in all Places. And besides that, you will hear the Holy Scriptures read, and have the Benefit of the publick Prayers.

When you come from Church, spend not the Remainder of the Day in Sports and Idleness, much less in Drinking and Gaming, as too many do: but if you have a Family, let some Time be spent with them, in praying, in reading God's Word, and some good Book; and let Children and Servants be instructed in their Catechism. Examine them about what they have heard, that so it may make them more attentive; and do you meditate on the same, that it may sink into your Heart. Works of Mercy and Necessity may be done on the Lord's Day; but by no Means allow your selves in any needless Labour, nor in travelling upon the Road, or wandring about to make idle Visits. God allows us six Days in the Week for our own Employments, let us devote the Lord's Day to his Service, readily and chearfully.

When the Sacrament of Baptism is administred, do you attend to it. Remember your own Engagement by having received it in your Infancy, and resolve to live answerable thereto. Join in Prayer for God's blessing on the Children then received into the Church. And when you bring your own Children to be baptized, see that you do most sincerely give them up to God, and devote them to his Service, with firm Resolutions to bring them up in his Fear, if God spare your Lives and theirs, and earnestly pray for his Grace to be given into their Souls. And those to whom you stand as Sureties, you ought to do your utmost towards their good Education in the Knowledge of God and Religion, according to the Charge given you, especially if the Parents die, or prove

negligent. And pray beware of a very wicked Practice which is common in ſome Places, that after a Child is baptized, the Neighbours that are invited, ſpend the reſt of the Day in Riot and Drunkenneſs, forgetting, that even now they renounced the Luſts of the Fleſh; thoſe who ſtood at the Font, and all the reſt, are under the ſame Obligation.

Whenever you are invited by your Miniſter to the holy Communion, do not willingly neglect the invitation; but come with a thankful Heart, to keep up the remembrance of Chriſt's Love in dying for ſinners, according to his expreſs Command, *Luke* 22.19. Take care to prepare your ſelves, by true Repentance for all your former ſins, and ſtedfaſt purpoſes by God's Grace, throughly to forſake the ſame. See that you be in perfect Charity with all Men, freely forgiving thoſe who have offended you, and offering ſatisfaction to thoſe whom you have offended. If after this they will not be reconciled, that's not your fault, but theirs; and therefore may not keep you from the Sacrament. Stay not away out of a Pretence, that you want time to prepare your ſelf. For a conſtant holy Life, is the beſt Preparation. If you are fit for Prayers, you are fit for the Communion. Do not think that the Communion is only for Rich People. The Souls of the Poor are as precious as the Rich; and as much concerned in Chriſt's Death; and they have as much cauſe to remember it, and ſeek after the benefits of it. If you have not Mony to Offer at the Collection, ſee that you Offer up your ſelves to God, and that will be of more Value. Complain not that you want Clothes, and therefore you Abſent, both from the Church and Communion; but ſee that you come in the Wedding Garment required in the Goſpel, with humble, penitent, thankful Hearts; and then you will be welcome Gueſts at Chriſt's Table. For your direction, if you have no Books on this Subject, yet Read ſeriouſly the Office for the Communion in the Common Prayer, and you may find very great Aſſiſtance from it. It's very fit alſo to Conſult with your Miniſter, eſpecially the firſt time you receive. Aſſure your ſelves, it's a very heinous ſin, to live one year after another, in the neglect of this weighty Duty, and argues a very great Contempt

tempt of our Saviour's Authority, and of his infinite Love and Kindness.

Before I leave speaking of your Duty to God, let me beseech you carefully to Abstain from that common hainous sin of Swearing. A most senseless piece of wickedness, that brings neither pleasure nor profit along with it. When you are call'd before the Magistrate in weighty Cases, you may lawfully swear, *Heb. 6. 16.* but take great Care to Swear the Truth, and nothing but the Truth; for otherwise, you call the True God to Witness a Lye, and do even call for his Vengeance upon your selves. In your ordinary Communication, avoid all manner of Swearing, either by the Sacred Name of God, or by any Creature, *Matth. 5. 34. Jam. 5. 12.* Use not such Expressions, *As you hope to be sav'd, As you hope for mercy*; with others the like, which are great Oaths, though frequently used upon every slight occasion. Do not so much as rashly and carelessly mention the Holy Name of God or Christ; but let your inward Reverence be manifested in your outward Expressions.

And to this I may fitly joyn an earnest Caution against the sin of Cursing, in which the Name of God is often dishonoured; when Men wish that God's Curse may light upon others, sometimes on their very Children and nearest Relations, sometimes on their Neighbours, and sometimes on their Cattel. Some prophane Wretches wish Damnation to those they Quarrel with, yea, even to themselves. And how common is it to hear Men in their Wrath, wish the Pox, or Plague, or Hanging to their Neighbour, or bidding the Devil take them. Indeed they themselves seem to be possess'd by him, whilst they Vent this Language of Hell; and do take the ready way to bring all manner of Curses, both on their own Soul and Body, *Psal. 109. 17, 18.* This wicked Custom proceeds both from the want of the True Fear of God in Men's Hearts, and also from want of Kindness and Charity to one another; of which I am next to speak a few words.

Next to the love of God above all, the loving of our Neighbours as our selves, is the great Duty of a Christian, as our Saviour reaches in that same place, *Mat. 22. 39, 40.* And *Love* is said *to be the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10. No-

9, 10. Nothing more becomes a Disciple of Jesus Christ, than to live in Love and Charity with all Men, doing all the good we can to others, but doing no manner of Evil to any. Read 1 *Cor.* 13. This is most frequently and strictly commanded in the Gospel, and made the very Badge and Character of a Christian, *Joh.* 13.34,35. This makes us most like to our blessed Lord and Master, *who went about continually doing good*, both to the Souls and Bodies of Men, even to the very worst of Men; and to his most bitter Enemies, did he shew great Charity and Kindness. And herein let us study to be like him to the utmost of our Power.

If we have true Love for all Men, we shall then easily and readily perform all those Duties which we owe to them in the several Places and Relations wherein we stand; of which I must not here go about to give a particular account. But in general, Husbands and Wives ought most entirely to love each other, and study to render one anothers Lives happy here, and their Souls hereafter. For if they live in Discord and Wrath, they have an Hell upon Earth whilst they live, and have reason to expect the Eternal Torments of Hell when they die. Parents ought to love their Children and take due Care of them, both as to Soul and Body; and Children ought to Honour and Obey their Parents, and Relieve them, if they stand in Need. Masters must be gentle and kind towards their Servants; and Servants must be faithful and obedient to their Masters, even to the Froward and Severe. Subjects must yield Obedience to all the lawful Commands of their Rulers, and patiently submit to what Punishments they inflict; and upon no pretence whatever may they Rebel against them; for it is most expresly forbidden in Scripture, and Damnation threatned to those that are Guilty, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2. And commonly Treason and Rebellion, bring nothing but Ruin and Misery in this World, as well as the next. The People ought to esteem and love their Ministers, to follow their Godly Admonitions and Examples, and afford them due Maintenance.

In brief, we must carefully abstain from doing any Injury to any Man, of what Ranks or Condition soever, either in his Soul or Body, his Estate or good Name; but must

must be ever ready to do all manner of Good to all Men according to our Ability and Opportunity. And hereby we are to shew, that we Love our Neighbours as our selves, by dealing with all Men so truly and justly, so mercifully and kindly, as we desire to be dealt with our selves. This is the great Rule of the Gospel, *Mat.* 7. 12. And by this Rule ought we to govern our selves in all our Carriage towards others, both in buying and selling, and in our whole Conversation. This is a very plain and easie Rule to walk by, and is most just and equal, and very large and comprehensive; so that if a Man will honestly and faithfully attend to it, he need not go far to seek for Direction how to behave himself in most Cases that may happen betwixt him and his Neighbour. Would I be reviled and slandered, cheated and cozened, beaten and hurt, or any other way abus'd? If not, then let me not use another at this rate. Would I be despised and derided for my Faults, or for my Poverty and Misfortune; Would I not rather in Reason desire to be kindly instructed, assisted and relieved? Thus then, let me deal with my Neighbour, and according to my power, with meekness and true kindness, instruct the Ignorant, reclaim the Vicious and Erroneous, comfort the Sad, relieve the Oppressed, feed the Hungry, and cloath the Naked. Even those that are of a mean Condition, must be ready to help such as are in greater want than themselves. The Man that lives by his Labour, is not wholly excused from Works of Charity, *Eph.* 4. 28. The Widow's Mite is very acceptable to God; and a Cup of cold Water shall not lose its Reward. A willing charitable Mind it is that God chiefly looks at, and calls for, and this the poorest may have, if it be not their own Fault.

And our Charity and Kindness is not only to be shewn to our Friends, but to our very Enemies themselves. We may not render Evil for Evil, but must study to overcome Evil by doing of Good. If another strike us we may not strike again; if he rail upon us, and revile us, we must not return the same ill Language; but either by silence, or by gentle and soft Answers endeavour to appease his Wrath. For the Rule is not, to deal with others as they deal with me, but as I in Reason desire to be

deal't with; and another Man's Fault will not excuse mine. If he do me an Injury, I must not be Judge in my own Cause, nor take upon me to Revenge it, but in weighty Cases may fly to the Magistrate for Relief. But upon no Account whatever may we bear any grudge or hatred in our Hearts against any Man, though never so wicked, nor never so much our Enemy; but we must pity him and pray for him, that God would give him a better mind. If ever we hope to find Mercy with God, and have our Trespasses forgiven, we must forgive those that Offend us, as we learn from the Lord's Prayer, and many most plain places of Scripture. See *Matth.* 5.44, *&c. Matth.* 18.21. to the end. *Rom.* 12. 14. to the end. We must shew meekness and gentleness to all Men, and never willingly say or do any thing to provoke another to Anger; nor should we be easily provoked, but very easily appeased and reconciled. It's very sad to consider, what wretched and miserable Lives many of the poorer sort lead, by their continual Brawling and Scolding, Quarrelling and Contending one with another; and sometimes when they have scarce Money to buy Bread, they'le throw it away in vexatious Law Suits, merely out of Spite and Revenge.

And the People of this Rank, ought especially to beware of envying those that are in better Condition than themselves. We ought to have that true Kindness and good Will for all Men, that we should be glad of their Prosperity, though we our selves be in Affliction: As on the other hand, we ought to have great Compassion for those in Misery, though we be in Prosperity.

And let such that are in Want, take heed that their Necessities put them upon no unlawful Course for their Relief. Particularly, beware of stealing any thing, though of a small Value. By degrees it's to be feared, you will go on to greater matters, and so may bring your selves to Shame and Punishment in this World as well as that to come. The best way to avoid this, is to be very diligent in your lawful Calling, as the Apostle directs in that place before-named, *Eph.* 4.28. If you are not able to Work, it's lawful to Beg. But by no means betake your selves to this lazy, unprofitable Life of Begging, if you

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are able to subsist by any other Lawful Course. He that will not work when he can, deserves not to Eat. But rather than either Steal or Starve, you may seek for Relief from your Neighbour's Charity. But do not go about to deceive him, by borrowing what you know you are never like to pay; for this is downright Cheating. Rather deal plainly, and make known your Necessities. If you Trust in God, and do your Duty, he will take Care of you: And though you may be in Straits sometimes, yet still you will find a Supply. And to prevent your Poverty, let me especially warn you against that common Brutish Sin of Drunkenness, which brings both this and many other Mischiefs along with it, as I have before told you. Indeed it hinders every thing that's good, and leads Men into all manner, both of Sin and Misery. This Vice it is that makes more Beggars than any other Cause. Wherefore, if you have any regard to your Families, any love to Soul or Body, avoid all Riot and Excess. Eat and Drink moderately, as may tend to keep you best in Health, and make you most fit for the Service of God, and your own Callings.

And lastly, Beware of that filthy sin of Whoredom, which very often goes along with Drunkenness, and as often brings the Curse of God, both upon Mens Bodies and Estates And to keep you innocent, avoid Idleness as well as Intemperance. And fly from all lewd and wicked Company, where you are in danger of being enticed and ensnared; and do not so much as allow your selves in any unclean Thoughts or Desires, nor in filthy Discourses, or in any wanton Carriage and Behaviour. For the preventing of all wickedness in this kind, God hath allowed Marriage, which is said to be Honourable in all, but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will Judge, *Heb.* 13. 4. Wherefore let them who are in that State keep strictly true to their Marriage Vow: And all both married and single, preserve both Body and Soul so Chaste and Pure, that the holy Spirit of God may now dwell in their Hearts, and they may be fit to dwell for ever in the Presence of the most Holy God.

And thus I have briefly given you an Account wherein consists that Holiness of Life, to which all Christians are

obliged by the Precepts of our Blessed Saviour, and by their Baptismal Vow, which binds them to keep his Precepts, and to follow his Example, who himself lived in the same holy manner that he taught; and hath commanded *those that say they abide in him, to walk as he walked*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 6. The sum of all you have in few words, which the Gospel teaches, even that we should *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and piously in the World*, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12.

And now let me again beseech you seriously to consider whether it has been your care to live such holy and good lives, yea or no. And wherein soever your Conscience doth accuse you, that you have neglected the Duties God hath commanded, or committed those Sins which he hath forbidden, do you humbly acknowlege and confess the same to Almighty God, with true godly Sorrow for the same, earnestly begging Mercy and Pardon for Christ's sake, who died on the Cross for Sinners, and thro' whom all that confess and forsake their Sins shall find Mercy Wherefore do you henceforward resolve by his Grace that you will forsake your Sins, and amend your Lives, and make it your chief business to keep Consciences void of Offence toward God and Man, not allowing your selves in any known sin, nor in the wilful neglect of any known Duty. Do not object against this, and say, that it is impossible to lead such an holy Life. For Thousands in the World, of all Ranks and Conditions, have done it in all Ages, by the Assistance of God's Grace, which you shall never want, if you seek it earnestly, and improve it diligently. And though there may at first be some Difficulty in leaving an ill course, yet by degrees it will grow easie, and you will then find nothing so sweet and pleasant as Religion and Virtue.

And do not, I beseech you, fancy that it is not for poor People to think of being so Religious and Godly; that this is only for the Rich, who have little else to do. Why, will not you that are Poor have as much Care of your own Souls as the Rich, and study to be Happy as well as they? By this means you will be even with them, yea much happier than they, even in this Life, except they be Good as well as Great. What is there in all I have said, but even

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the poorest may perform, if they have but a willing Mind? May you not love God and your Neighbour, be Sober and Chast, Meek and humble, Pray to God, and Praise his Name, *&c.* Nay, is not this the much better way to keep you from Poverty, or to help you out of it? Is it not much cheaper to live soberly and honestly, than to live in Drunkenness and Whoredom, and such like wastful sins? Does it not cost you much more to go to Law for Revenge, than to forgive an Injury? One Vice costs more the maintaining, than ten Virtues. And I am confident, more Families are brought to Poverty by gratifying their Lusts, than by providing for their Children, how many soever they be. Is it not, think you, much better for your Selves and Families, to spend the Lord's-Day in God's Service, both in Publick and Private, than to wast your Time and Mony at the Alehouse? Daily Experience shews, that it is not Religion, but the want of it, that makes Men Poor and Miserable. Besides that, such good People have God's Blessing and Favours, as I have already shewed; and therefore he'll be sure to take care of them and theirs.

And pray do not think that you shall be saved merely because you are Poor: For if you be wicked and ungodly, you will certainly be miserable in the next World as well as this. *Lazarus* was not saved because he was Poor, but because he was a Pious Good Man: And on the other hand, *Dives* was not Damn'd for being Rich, but because he was Luxurious and Proud, and wholly given up to Pamper and Adorn his Carcase.

Let me further warn you against two or three dangerous Mistakes that harden many Men in their Sins. Beware of thinking that it's enough for a Man to be baptized, and keep his Church, and go to Prayers and Sermons, and sometimes to the Communion, and say his Prayers in private, that this is enough to prove him a good Christian, and make sure of Salvation. All this is very good, but this will not serve turn, except our Hearts be so thoroughly sanctified by the Grace of God, that we do truly love God above all, and set our Hearts on the Joy of Heaven, and love our Neighbours, and be true and just in all our Dealings, temperate and chast in our Conversation;

ſaction; as is before deſcribed. And this is the great End of Prayers, Sermons and Sacraments, to make us more and more holy in Heart and Life: without which we ſhall be rather worſe than better for them, *Matth.*7.21,22,23.

Be not ſo weak as to think you may be ſaved by a good Belief alone, by your Faith in Chriſt, and truſting in God, without Obedience to his Commands. It is for Chriſt's Sake only you are ſaved, but he will ſave none but thoſe who obey him, *Heb.* 5. 9. And that only is true ſaving Faith, which purifies the Heart, and produces Obedience, as you have heard before. And ſince God has plainly told us, that we cannot be ſaved without Holineſs, if we take up a foolliſh Confidence that we may be ſaved without it, this is not truſting in God, but our own Fancies, and the Devil's Deluſions. We may ſafely truſt in God's Promiſes, but then let us ſee to perform the Conditions, and become ſuch an humble, holy People, as he has promiſed for Chriſt's Sake to own and ſave.

Take heed alſo of miſtaking the Nature of Repentance, as if it were only being a little ſorry for our Sins, and crying to God for Mercy, and then all will be well, tho we go on ſtill in our old Ways. But this is a moſt dangerous Miſtake. For a Man never truly repents till he forſakes his Sin, and changes his Courſe: When the Drunkard becomes ſober, and the prophane Man a devout Worſhipper of God, and ſo continues. True Repentance changes the Heart and Life of a Sinner.

And laſtly, do not think it enough to forſake ſome Sins and keep others; to do ſome good Duties and neglect others, and then excuſe your ſelves by ſaying it is your *Failing*. *Every Man has his Failing, and this is mine.* So ſays the Drunkard and the Whoremonger, and ſo ſays the angry Man when he ſwears or curſes, or gives bad Language. But ſuch Sins as are committed againſt Knowledg and Conſcience, and continued from Time to Time, when we have leiſure to think beforehand and prevent them, theſe are to be reckoned as wilful Sins, not as Failings. Eſpecially ſuch groſs Sins as Drunkenneſs, Whoredom, common Swearing or Lying, and the like, are not to be reckoned as Failings. Indeed whatever Sin a Man loves and pleads for and allows himſelf in, is not a meer Infirmi-

mity, but a wilful Tranſgreſſion. A good Man hates all Sin as he does Sickneſs, and ſtrives and watches, and prays againſt it. He hates every falſe Way, and has a Reſpect to all God's Commands. A true Chriſtian muſt be an entirely good Man, all of a Piece. A great Matter I find it is with many People, that they do wrong to no body, nor have any Malice in their Heart, and therefore they think themſelves in good Condition God ward. But though this is one good Part of our Duty, yet it is but a Part. We muſt alſo ſee that we do not wrong Almighty God and our own Souls by ſetting our Hearts chiefly on this World, by neglecting his Worſhip and Service, by living in Exceſs or Uncleanneſs, or any other known Sin. We muſt be both pious toward God, loyal to our Prince, juſt and charitable to our Neighbour, humble and ſober, every way holy and good, if we will approve our ſelves to be Chriſtians indeed. He that wilfully offends in one Point, and allows himſelf therein, is guilty in effect of breaking the whole Law; For he deſpiſes God's Authority; and if he meets with the ſame Temptation, will commit any other Sin. And as is commonly and truly ſaid in this Caſe, one Stab, though but with a Pen knife, may wound a Man as mortally, as twenty Thruſts with a Sword; ſo one Sin loved and delighted in, may damn a Man's Soul as well as a thouſand, *James*, 2. 10.

Having thus endeavoured briefly to remove your Objections and Miſtakes, I do now again in the laſt place, come to enforce my Exhortation that you would ſeriouſly and ſtedfaſtly reſolve to caſt away every Sin, and moſt entirely devote your ſelves to the leading ſuch a godly, righteous and ſober Life, as you are bound to by your Chriſtian Baptiſm. If you are in diſpute with your ſelves, whether you ſhould reſolve upon it, pray look over the Arguments before laid down, and ponder them in your Mind; and then certainly you cannot but own, that I perſuade you to nothing, but what is very juſt and reaſonable, and every Way for your greateſt Good. And if you are convinced of this, then proceed forthwith to this pious Reſolution, without trifling or delaying. The ſooner you do it, the ſafer it is, and the better for you. Do not go on in Sin at preſent, on a Pretence, that you'll

you'll repent hereafter, when you are older, or when you come to be sick, and to die. Do not put off the great Business of Life to the End of your Days, when you are not sure of Time or Strength, or of God's Assistance, or Acceptance of you. Do not plead the Example of the Thief upon the Cross: For his Case was nothing like yours that have long enjoyed the Offers of Grace and Mercy. If now from this present Time you will heartily and sincerely return to God, you have no Reason to despair of his Mercies, how many or great soever your Sins have been: But if you still persist in Sin, presuming upon God's Mercy hereafter, you have just Cause to fear, that this bold Presumption, and horrid Abuse of God's Grace, may end in your eternal Ruin and Damnation.

But if you are willing now speedily to enter upon this Resolution and Purpose, then let me in a few Words farther direct you, by what Means you may render it firm and lasting, and may be best enabled to perform the same.

I. And first, I would advise you to take the next Opportunity to confirm this holy Resolution, at the Table of the Lord. There solemnly renew your Baptismal Vow. Dedicate and give up your self to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; renouncing the Devil, the World and the Flesh, and all those wicked Ways they would draw you to, more especially those Sins which you have been formerly most guilty of. Henceforth, let the Lord Jesus that bought you with his Blood, be taken for your only Lord and Master, to govern you by his Spirit, and by his Laws, as ever you desire and hope to be saved by his Death and Resurrection. And use frequently to think of this solemn Engagement, after you have made it: That it may have due Force upon you, when you are tempted to revolt to any wicked Practice. Often repeat the same betwixt God and your own Soul; and especially renew it by frequent Attendance on the holy Communion, there seeking for Grace and Strength from God, to walk in his holy Ways stedfastly and constantly.

II. But that brings me to a second Direction, That you should not resolve upon all this, in a Confidence of your own Strength, but in a most humble Dependence on the Grace of God, which he is ever willing to bestow on such

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as ſeek it earneſtly in the Way he has appointed, by a due Attendance on the Means of Grace, the Word, Prayer and Sacraments. Wherefore as you have Opportunity, attend carefully to the reading and hearing of his Word, *and hide it in your Heart, that you may not ſin againſt him.* And be very much in Prayer to God for his holy Spirit, to be given you thro' his Son Jeſus, who will powerfully intercede for you, and make good his Promiſes to humble and devout Supplicants, *Luke* 11. 13. *Joh.* 16. 23, 24. Whenever you are in danger, and are aſſaulted by any Temptation to Sin, or are backward to what is good, then eſpecially pray fervently for quickning and ſtrengthening Grace, and your Prayers ſhall not be in vain.

III. To your Prayers add conſtant Watchfulneſs over your ſelf at all Times, and in all Places and Companies. Watch over your Thoughts themſelves, and over your Words and Actions. Satan is ever watching to deceive us, and there are many Snares and Dangers in all our Ways, and we have corrupt Natures, and treacherous Hearts, and therefore had need to be very watchful, to avoid all Occaſions of Sin, as much as poſſible, and to ſuppreſs the very firſt Beginnings. Think before-hand what Temptations you are like to meet with, and fortifie your ſelf againſt what you cannot ſhun. Do not wilfully run into Danger; eſpecially, beware of bad Company, by which many are drawn back to their former Looſneſs. Be not led away by their Counſel or Example, nor be diſcouraged by their Jeers and Cenſures. Uſe often to look back upon your Actions; and if you have been drawn into any wilful Sin do not make a light matter of it, nor yet deſpair of Pardon, if you be truly penitent. Wherefore, ſpeedily and earneſtly betake your ſelf to God by true Repentance, begging Mercy for Chriſt's ſake, and more Grace to ſtrengthen and aſſiſt you. Renew your Purpoſes for Amendment of Life, and ſet your Watch more ſtrictly for the future.

IV. To quicken an engage you to this Watchfulneſs; remember, that Almighty God is ever preſent with you, and obſerves all your Ways, and takes great Delight in your Piety and Holineſs, but is of purer Eyes than to behold the leaſt Iniquity with any Pleaſure. Wherefore always walk as in the Preſence of this Holy God, whether you are alone, or in Company.

V. Think

V. Think often, how near you ſtand to another World, and what an Account you muſt give to God, of all your Deeds done in the Body; and ſo live now, as will be moſt for your Comfort at Death and Judgment. When the Profits and Pleaſures of Sin entice you, compare them with the eternal Joys which they will deprive you of, and with the eternal Torments they lead to. Think whether ever any Man by ſinning againſt God, did gain ſomewhat that is better than Heaven, or that is worth going to Hell for. Let Eternity be very much in your Thoughts, and the fading Vanities of this World will have little Eſteem with you. Often ponder of thoſe weighty Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *What will it profit a a Man to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* Mark. 8. 36, 37.

Laſtly, Inſtead of more Direction, let me adviſe you to acquaint your ſelf with your Miniſter; and conſult him in the great concernment of your Soul, as Men are wont to do the Lawyer and the Phyſician, in matters that concern their Bodies and Eſtates. Do not think it enough to hear his Sermons in publick, but take Advice from him in private, and open to him the State and Caſe of your Soul, ſo far as may enable him to give ſuch Directions, as are moſt proper to your Condition. This eſpecially you ought to do, when you firſt make Entrance upon an holy Life, and do firſt addreſs your ſelf to the holy Communion; or when you are under any great Doubts, and Trouble of Mind, and are vexed with ſore Temptations, either of one ſort or other; or when you are ſet upon by ſuch that would draw you away from our Church, either to Popery, or to any other Sect amongſt us. Then preſently betake your ſelf to your Miniſter: And in theſe or the like Caſes, take Direction from him, and be ſure to follow his wholeſome Counſel, and deſire his Prayers to God for you. I know in large Pariſhes, Miniſters are not able to have a particular Knowledg of every Perſon; but yet all that know the Worth of Souls, and the Price that was paid for them, will be ready to give Attendance to the meaneſt of their People, that ſhall apply themſelves to them for Advice and Comfort, and will be glad of all Opportunities to promote the Honour and Intereſt of

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their Saviour, and the Good of precious Souls committed to their Care.

And thus have I as plainly and as fully as I well could in ſo little Room, directed you in that holy Way which leads to eternal Glory; and have ſhewn you what great Reaſon you have to walk in that Way, and to continue therein to the End. As to thoſe who deſire larger Directions, next to the holy Scriptures (which I beſeech you to read frequently with Humility and Seriouſneſs, eſpecially the New Teſtament.) Next to them, I ſhall refer you only to that pious and moſt uſeful Book, *The Whole Duty of Man.* And heartily I wiſh, that every poor Family in the Kingdom, was furniſh'd with one of thoſe Books, together with a Bible and Common-Prayer Book, which might all be purchaſed for much leſs than Five Shillings; and therefore it's great Pity they ſhould be any where wanting. Though alas, I know, there are many Families of poor People, where none of them read, and ſo Books to them are uſeleſs. Great Charity therefore it would be for rich Landlords and Gentlemen, to ſee that the Children of their poor Tenants and Neighbours be put out to School; and then to beſtow at leaſt, Bibles upon them, that the Knowledg of God and Religion may be promoted amongſt them; which would make greatly for the good and Welfare both of Church and State. For though Brainſick Opinions and falſe Principles may make Men proud and head ſtrong, and troubleſome to their Governours, yet ſolid Knowledg and ſincere Godlineſs will make Men humble and meek, quiet and peaceable; obedient to Magiſtrates and Miniſters, full of Charity to their Neighbours, and ready to every good Work. And I am ſure an Increaſe of this truly religious Temper, would be one of the greateſt Bleſſings that can be beſtowed upon this Earth, and would ſettle Kingdoms, Towns and Families in Peace and Concord, which almoſt every where are divided amongſt themſelves, as well as againſt one another: And by ſuch bleſſed Effects of true Religion, ſomething of Heaven would be brought down upon Earth, and our Souls would be well fitted for Heaven, when we are called off from this Earth, into thoſe happy Regions above, where there is nothing elſe but Peace and Holineſs, and Love

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and Joy. And may it please God to bless these plain and short Instructions for the enlightning of any Minds with that *Wisdom from above*, which is thus *pure and peaceable*, then shall I obtain my Design, and have great Cause to be thankful. And that the Reader may joyn with me in these Wishes, I have annexed hereto a Prayer for Grace to lead an holy Life. And if he will but add diligent Endeavours to frequent and fervent Prayers, neither his Labour nor mine will be in vain, through the Grace and Blessing of Almighty God, from whom comes every good and perfect Gift, to whom be given all Honour and Glory, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Grace before Meat.

O *Lord we beseech thee, forgive us all our Sins, and bless us, and these thy good Creatures for our use, and help us to live and serve thee, the giver of all Good, for Jesus Christ his sake.* Amen.

A Grace after Meat.

O *Lord make us truly thankful for these and all other thy Mercies; and as we are maintained by thy Bounty, help us to live to thy Honour and Glory, for Jesus Christ his sake.* Amen.

A Prayer coming into Church.

PRevent us O *Lord, in all our Doings with thy Grace; and grant that our coming together at this time may be for the better, and not for the worse, for Jesus Christ his sake.*

After Sermon.

GRant, *I beseech thee, Almighty God, that the Words which I have heard this day with my outward Ears, may through thy Grace be so grafted inwardly in my Heart, that they may bring forth in me the fruit of good living, to the Honour and Praise of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

A Prayer

A Prayer for the Assistance of God's Grace, in order to the leading an Holy Life.

Note, *This Prayer may be likewise used in the Family Morning and Evening, adding* we *instead of* I, our *instead of* my, *and* us *instead of* me.

O Most Holy, and ever blessed Lord God, I do humbly cast down my self before thee, acknowledging and lamenting my own Sinfulness, and earnestly begging thy Grace and Mercy through the Lord Jesus, our only Mediatour and Advocate. I confess, O God, I am a vile Sinner, polluted from the very Womb; but since I came to the use of my Reason, I have defiled my self with many wilful and hainous Transgressions. I have sadly neglected thy Service, and dishonoured thy Name, and have been greatly wanting in those Duties which I owe to thee my God, to my Neighbour, and to my own Soul; and have not lived in such a Godly, Righteous, Charitable and Sober Manner, as I ought to have done: But have often acted contrary to my own Reason and Conscience, and to the plain Precepts of thy Word; and contrary to my own Promises and Vows for better Obedience. O Lord, give me a clear sight of my Sins, and such a deep Sense of the Evil of my ways, that my Heart may be truly humbled, and broken in the remembrance thereof. And for the Lord Jesus's sake, who died for Sinners, be merciful to me, O Father of Mercies, pardon all my Iniquities, and let them not be remembred against me to my Condemnation, either in this World or that to come. Nor is it only Pardon that I beg, but most earnestly I beseech thee by thy Holy Spirit, to sanctifie me both in Body and Soul, that being made Pure and Holy in Heart and Life, I may serve thee diligently all my Days on Earth, and so may enjoy thee for ever in Heaven. I am fully convinced, that it is both my

Duty and Happineſs to fear and ſerve thee, the great and glorious God, who haſt made me and redeemed me, and hitherto graciouſly preſerved me. I acknowledge thy Service to be perfect Freedom, and all thy Laws to be holy, juſt and good. Wherefore I deſire utterly to renounce and forſake every evil Way, and moſt entirely devote my ſelf to ſerve and pleaſe thee in Newneſs of Life. But thou, O Lord, knoweſt the Weakneſs and Corruption of my Nature; and how by evil Cuſtoms, I have made my ſelf more prone to Sin, more backward to that which is good. O do thou throughly change my Nature by thy Grace, that I may hate and abhor all Wickedn es, and take delight in the Ways of Piety and Holineſs. Let no unmortified Luſt remain in my Soul; but do thou purifie and cleanſe me from Pride and Covetouſneſs, from Envy and Malice, and from all impure and ſenſual Affections and Deſires, and enrich me with all the Graces of thy holy Spirit. Give me ſuch a clear Knowledge of thy infinite Goodneſs, and of all thy glorious Perfections, that I may ever humbly admire and adore thee, and love thee with all my Heart and Soul, and cleave to thee as my only Portion, preferring thy Favour before all the Enjoyments of this World. Help me always firmly to truſt in thee, and freely to leave all my Affairs to thy wiſe and gracious Providence, abſolutely reſigning my Will to thy holy Will in all things. Make me truly thankful for all thy Mercies, and patient under Afflictions. By thy teaching let me learn to be content in all Eſtates and Conditions. And good God, ſuffer me not in the greateſt Difficulties and Dangers to diſtruſt thy Mercies, or take any unlawful Courſe for my Relief. I beg from thee my daily Bread, and beſeech thee to give me an Heart well ſatisfied with what thou ſeeſt moſt convenient for me. Give me ſuch a Spirit of Piety and Devotion, that I may take great Delight in thy Worſhip and Service, both in publick and

private.

private. Fill me with ſuch Love to my bleſſed Saviour, and with ſuch thankfulneſs for his love in dying for Sinners, that I may go with more Delight to the Holy Communion, for the ſgood of my Soul, than to the richeſt Feaſt that is made for my Body.

Help me, O God to ſhew my Love to thy bleſſed Self, by true Love and Charity to my Neighbours. Make me tractable and obedient to my Governours, both in Church and State, peaceable and gentle towards all Men, dealing with them ſo juſtly and truly, as I my ſelf deſire to be dealt with. Make me tender and compaſſionate, and ready to do all the good I can to others: And let thy Grace enable me freely to forgive thoſe that do evil to me, as I my ſelf hope for mercy and forgiveneſs from thee, my God. And help me always to live ſoberly and temperately, purely and chaſtly in Heart and Life; and with great meekneſs and humility, in the ſenſe of my own unworthineſs and manifold imperfections.

O Lord, grant that my Heart may be fill'd with earneſt longings and deſires after thoſe Graces, which now with my Lips I pray for; and help me to ſhew my ſincerity, by diligent endeavours, daily to grow in all Grace and Goodneſs, and to perfect Holineſs in thy Fear. Make me watchful over my ſelf, and all my ways, that I may carefully avoid all occaſions of ſin, and may check the firſt motions thereto in my own Heart. Keep me always deeply ſenſible of thy Preſence, that I may walk humbly with thee my God, and approve my ſelf to thee in well-doing. Wean my Heart from all things here below, and prepare me for my departure hence into a better World. Help me always to live in ſuch a Religious and Holy manner as will be moſt for my Comfort at Death and Judgment. Strengthen my Belief of the precious Promiſes, and dreadful Threatnings of the Goſpel; and let this Belief rule and govern me in my whole Converſation. O that I may never be guilty of ſo much folly and mad-

neſs, as to loſe the eternal and unſpeakable Joys of Heaven, and throw my ſelf into the eternal Torments of Hell, for any of the Profits or Pleaſures of Sin that are but for a moment. Do thou, O Lord, by thy holy Spirit, ever keep upon my Mind ſuch a freſh and lively ſenſe of the reaſonableneſs of Religion, and of the miſchief and folly of all Sin and Wickedneſs, that no Temptations of Satan, no Allurements of the World or the Fleſh, may hinder me from my Duty, nor draw me into any known Sin; but do thou ever ſtrengthen and aſſiſt me by thy Grace, and guide me by thy Counſel, till thou ſhalt bring me to thy ſelf in Glory.

Neither do I pray for my ſelf alone, but for all Mankind, beſeeching thee to ſend the Light of thy Goſpel into all the dark Corners of the Earth; and grant, that they who do enjoy it, may walk in all holy obedience thereto. Be merciful to theſe Kingdoms, pardon our Sins, and reform us from them. Heal all our Diviſions; continue our Mercies, and make us truly thankful for them. Bleſs the King's Majeſty, with the Royal Family, and all thoſe that are in Authority under him; and grant to us and all his Subjects, Grace to lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godlineſs and Honeſty. Bleſs the Miniſters of thy holy Word and Sacraments, and make them very Diligent, and very Succeſsful in their Endeavours: Help us to bring ſuch Fruit from the Bleſſings we enjoy, that thy Goſpel, and the Ordinances thereof may be continued to us, and to the Generation after us. Shew mercy to all that are afflicted, whether in Soul or Body; and preſerve thoſe that travel on their lawful Occaſions, by Land or by Sea. Bleſs all my Friends and Relations, particularly all that belong to this Family; and help us all to live in the Fear and Love of thee our God, and in Peace and Charity one with another. Let thy Bleſſing and good Preſence be with me thy unworthy Servant, now and at all times,

times, at my down-lying and up-riſing, in my going out and coming in, be thou my God and my Guide, even to the Death; and my eternal Portion, when Time ſhall be no more.

And accept, O God, of my unfeigned deſires, to bleſs and praiſe thy glorious Name, for all thy Mercies and Favours to my ſelf, and to all Men: I bleſs thee for my Reaſon and Senſes, my Health and Strength, Food and Raiment, and all the Comforts of this Life; but above all, I praiſe thee for thine ineſtimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for all the means of Grace, and for the hope of Glory. And I beſeech thee, give me that due Senſe of all thy Mercies, that my Heart may be unfeignedly thankful, that I may ſhew forth thy Praiſe, not only with my Lips, but in my Life, by giving up my ſelf to thy Service, and by walking before thee in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of my Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe moſt holy Name and Words, I continue to Pray as he hath taught us in his Goſpel, ſaying:

OUR Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; thy Kingdom come; thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily Bread; Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us; And lead us not into Temptation; But deliver us from Evil; For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Love of God, and the Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with me now and evermore. *Amen.*

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